

1970

## 1970: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text

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## PREFACE

The world's first Christians "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42) as part of that which was designed to bring them from infancy to maturity in Christ. That which was taught was not "the word of men but... the word of God" (I Thessalonians 2:13), and it was designed to bring them to faith that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" and to that life which was to be found only "in his name" (John 20:31). That same inspired teaching was to be the food for spiritual growth which would bring them to maturity (I Peter 2:2).

Christians of every age have found spiritual guidance and direction as they — like those of old — continue stedfastly in that same "Apostles' Doctrine." It is with this in mind that the Lectureship Committee chose this vital theme for this year's Abilene Christian College Lectureship. This book, containing the theme speeches and panel speeches, goes forth for the benefit of those who desire a copy of the addresses that they may study and share them with others.

If we are to be the people of God, we must go forth into the world with His message — the same message preached by the apostles. This volume on *The Apostles' Doctrine* goes forth with the prayer that some contribution to this great enterprise may be made thereby.



# MAIN SPEECHES



## THE FAITH THAT SAVES

### WALLACE GOOCH

Wallace Gooch was born August 24, 1920, near Springfield, Missouri.

He was reared in that city, and after graduation from Springfield High School attended Freed-Hardeman College and Southwest Missouri State College.

His first preaching in local work was in Killeen, Texas, where he met and was married to Gwendolyn Sprott in 1941. His father-in-law and a brother-in-law serve as elders in that good church.

Two sons are graduates of Abilene Christian College: Dick, class of '68, and Eddie, class of '69. A third son, Steve, is a senior in Temple High School.



His local ministry has been with churches in Gatesville; Dallas (Urbandale); Waco (South Waco); Victoria; Austin (Cameron Road); Altus, Oklahoma.

He presently serves the Northside church in Temple, Texas, since October, 196.

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“Thy faith hath saved thee!” These words spoken by the Savior to a blind man who had cried out to Him for mercy, and to a sinful woman who had bathed His feet with her

tears, are words which may be said to every saved person on earth: "Thy faith hath saved thee!"

The absolute necessity of faith in the salvation of the soul is a doctrine emphasized throughout the Bible. There is no substitute for it, and "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Hebrews 11:6)."

Multiplied thousands of Israelites were forbidden entrance into the promised land "because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:19; 4:6), and Christians are admonished to "labor therefore to enter into that rest [Heaven], lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Hebrews 4:11).

Jesus declared, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). And, "... he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). In Revelation 21:8, we are told that the unbelieving shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. These are but a sampling of scriptures which make it crystal clear that without faith there is no salvation.

But, what is this faith that saves? Faith is defined as: "unquestioning belief; unquestioning belief in God, religion, etc.; complete trust or confidence; loyalty."<sup>1</sup>

The faith that saves includes all of this — and more.

<sup>1</sup> Webster's *New World Dictionary of the American Language*, 1967 edition

*THE FAITH THAT SAVES IS UNQUESTIONING  
BELIEF IN GOD*

... in the reality of God's existence. "He that cometh to him must believe that HE IS" (Hebrews 11:6). In this day of doubt, this age of agnosticism, let us reaffirm our unquestioning belief in the reality of God — the only true and living God; the "God that made the world and all things therein," who "giveth to all life, and breath, and all things," and in whom "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:24f).

"Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else" (Deuteronomy 4:39).

"The Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation... He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion... The Lord of hosts is his name" (Jeremiah 10:10f).

There is "one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:6). Evidences of God's existence, His infinite wisdom, and His limitless power, are simply overwhelming. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalms 14:1).

It is not the purpose of this lesson to present proofs that "God is"; but unquestioning belief in His being, in His almighty power, His all-pervading presence, and in His perfect perception of all things, is "the faith that saves."

*THE FAITH THAT SAVES IS UNQUESTIONING  
BELIEF IN JESUS CHRIST*

... as the Son of God and the Saviour of men. Jesus said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). He claimed to be the only begotten Son of God and the Saviour of the lost. These wonderful claims are substantiated by staggering evidence.

"From Moses to Malachi the Old Testament foretells the deity of the Son of God, and from the manger of Bethlehem to the cross of Calvary these prophecies find their fulfillment. The evidence is preponderant. Of the old scriptures Jesus said: 'These are they which testify of me.' And, 'beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.' The list of Old Testament references to Christ cited in the New Testament by various quotations and allusions number more than 300. The prophetic preview of him sets forth that he would be of the Hebrew race, of the Jewish nation, of the Davidic family; he would be the seed of woman, of virgin birth, cradled in a Bethlehem manger, have a Galilean ministry, an ignominious death, a glorious resurrection, an exalted throne not on earth, and a spiritual kingdom not of this world..."<sup>2</sup>

His supernatural life, his supernatural teaching, his supernatural works, his resurrection from the dead, all lend their powerful testimonies to the thrilling truth that he was more than a natural man—that he is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of men! The miracle of Jesus can be explained in no other way. An unknown author has observed:

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<sup>2</sup>Foy E. Wallace, Jr. in "Torch," Vol. 1, page 1

"Here is a young man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until he was thirty, and then for three years was an itinerant preacher.

"He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to a college. He never travelled 200 miles from the place where he was born. He never did any of the things which usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

"While he was still a young man, the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth, and that was his coat. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

"Nineteen centuries wide have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race and the leader of the column of progress.

"I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever sailed, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as has that ONE SOLITARY LIFE!"

Truly, this man is the Son of God, and the faith that saves is unquestioning belief in him as such.

*THE FAITH THAT SAVES IS THE FAITH  
PREACHED BY PAUL*

... and the other apostles of our Lord. In a very real sense,

the faith that saves is the theme of this lectureship: THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE—the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Quite frequently in the New Testament the terms "faith" and "the faith" are used as synonyms for "the gospel," and refer to the complete body of truth revealed in and by Jesus Christ. For example consider Galatians 3:23-25:

"But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

In the first chapter of Galatians, Paul relates that following his conversion and the commencement of his preaching of Jesus as the Christ, the churches of Judea heard that "he which once persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which he once destroyed" (Galatians 1:23). This "faith" which Paul preached was simply and purely "the gospel" of Jesus Christ.

Let us, and all those about us, give earnest heed to these words of him who preached "the faith that saves":

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed... For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not



after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:6f).

The faith which Paul preached was received by direct revelation from the Lord. And "woe is unto me," he declared, "if I preach not the gospel." Woe is to any man who preaches not the same gospel (the same faith) the apostles preached! Any deviation from this precious faith is a perversion of it, and it will bring upon the pervert the anathema of heaven! How exceedingly careful we must be to preach this faultless faith which has been so perfectly recorded by Holy Spirit inspired men.

Let men of God rise up in courageous and loyal preaching and defense of pure apostolic teaching, and in the words of Jude,

"Contend earnestly for the faith which was oncedelivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

In this twentieth century, it is still the first-century faith that saves! This faith was ONCE, FOR ALL MEN, FOR ALL TIME, delivered unto the saints. It is relevant to every age, to every man, to every need of the human soul. It is the faith that saves, and there is none other. There is "one faith"! (Ephesians 4:5)

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:16, 17).

In this age of intellectualism and philosophical thought, let us not be ashamed of the simple, plain, pure gospel of our Lord—but, rather, let us stand with him who said:

“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (I Corinthians 2:1-5).

*THE FAITH THAT SAVES IS COMPLETE TRUST  
AND CONFIDENCE IN GOD*

“In God We Trust” must be more than a motto inscribed upon the coins and currency of our nation. This sentiment must be inscribed upon our hearts and must characterize our daily lives, if we are to be saved.

“Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust” (Psalms 40:4). “O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him” (Psalms 34:8).

Fears, frustrations, and anxieties are the scourge of mankind, and are by no means strangers to many disciples of Christ. The burdens of life can be mighty hard to bear. Clouds of doubt and storms of strife confront us all at times. Treacherous rivers must sometimes be crossed, and towering mountains have to be climbed. The shadow of death hovers near us all, and we are destined to pass through its dark valley.

In view of these realities, before and lest we panic, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5, 6). "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed... Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Psalms 37:3, 5).

"Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them shout for joy, because thou defendest them" (Psalms 5:11).

Total trust, complete confidence in God's providential care is the faith that saves us from life's perplexities and fears. The Psalmist exclaimed: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea" (Psalms 16:1, 2).

Paul said, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day" (I Timothy 1:12). "For he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Hebrews 13:5, 6). And, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31)

We can well afford to place our unlimited confidence in God! "He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think..." (Ephesians 3:20). Jeremiah exclaims, "Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm,

and there is nothing too hard for thee... the Great, the Mighty God, the Lord of hosts is his name, great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruits of his doings" (Jeremiah 32:17-19).

"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite" (Psalms 147:5). The almighty, all-wise, all-knowing God of the universe knows us, loves us, and cares for us! "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your cares upon him; for he careth for you" (I Peter 5:6, 7).

God's ways are not our ways. His ways are higher than our ways as the heavens are higher than the earth. We may wonder, at times, how God operates in our lives, and why He operates as He does. But faith never questions God nor doubts Him. "He doeth all things well!"

The patriarch Job did not understand why the God he loved and served allowed him to be deprived of all his possessions, his children, and his health. Job thought that God had dealt him these staggering blows, but worshipfully said, "...the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly (Job 1:21-22). With an unshakable faith in his God, he confidently declared, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust Him" (Job 13:15). This is the faith that saves!

The following poem, which has been in my possession for many years, expresses this faith so beautifully:

"I know not why His hand is laid in chastening on my  
 life;  
 Nor why it is my little world is filled so full of strife.  
 I know not why, when faith looks up and seeks for rest  
 from pain,  
 That o'er my sky fresh clouds arise and drench my path  
 with rain.  
 I know not why my prayer so long by Him has been  
 denied:  
 Nor why, while others' ships sail on, mine should in port  
 abide.

"But I do know that God is love, that He my burden  
 shares;  
 And though I do not understand, I know, for me, He  
 cares!  
 I know the heights for which I long are often reached  
 through pain;  
 I know the sheaves must needs be threshed to yield the  
 golden grain.  
 I know that, though He may remove the friends on whom  
 I lean,  
 'Tis that I thus may learn to love and trust the One  
 unseen.  
 And, when at last I see His face and know as I am  
 known,  
 I will not care how rough the road that lead me to my  
 home."

(Author unknown)

*THE FAITH THAT SAVES IS THE FAITH  
 THAT OBEYS*

True faith is active, responsive, obedient to the will of God. And if it is not, it either does not exist or exists in too little quantity to be rewarded or blessed.

Various church disciplines and manuals may proclaim

“that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort” or that we are “saved by faith alone”--but God’s Word teaches to the absolute contrary.

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? . . . Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only . . . For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (James 2:14-26).

While it is clear that men are saved by faith (if saved at all), it is equally clear that no man can be saved by faith alone. Faith saves when faith obeys! Until and unless faith demonstrates itself in some overt action, it is as dead as a hammer! In Galatians 5:6, it is proclaimed that “faith which worketh by love” is that which avails in the saving of souls.

And, when the Lord defines the work to be done, the act to be performed, that is the action faith must perform before faith will be rewarded.

As the writer of Hebrews extolls the faith of Abel,

Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, etc., the following pattern is consistently drawn: first, there is faith; then, there is an act of faith; finally, God's blessing is bestowed.

Abel's faith prompted him to offer unto God a more excellent sacrifice than did Cain. The result? God testified that Abel was righteous. We see the order: faith; act of faith; blessing.

Enoch's faith moved him to please God. The result? He was translated that he should not see death. Note the order: faith; act of faith; blessing.

Noah's faith was such as to cause him to prepare an ark. The result? He and his family were saved from the flood. The same order: faith, act of faith, blessing.

Abraham's faith caused him to obey God to go out into a place unknown to him. The result? He received that land for an inheritance. The same consistent order: faith—act of faith—then, God's blessing.

Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth [there is "faith"] and is baptized [there is the "act of faith"] shall be saved [there is the "blessing"]." Mark 16:15, 16.

An exponent of the "saved by faith alone" theory may shout, "I regret that the word 'Do' is in the Bible! Faith alone is the true doctrine!!" But, that doesn't take "Do" out of the Bible. The Lord put it there, and it is still there! And the Lord put "Do" between faith and salvation, and that's where it still is!

He says, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46) Jesus says, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock... and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand... and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matthew 7:24-27).

Yea, verily, Jesus Christ "is the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him"! (Hebrews 5:9) The faith that saves is the faith that unquestioningly and unhesitatingly obeys the commands of the Lord!

In the 9th chapter of Mark, we are told of a heartbroken father who brought his afflicted son to Jesus. This boy was possessed by an evil spirit which tormented the child unmercifully. The anguished father appealed to Jesus: "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us" The Saviour replied, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." The father cried out, "I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

So, we also may say, "Lord, I believe!"

Let us also cry out, "Lord, help thou our unbelief!!"



## IS YOUR GOD TOO SMALL?

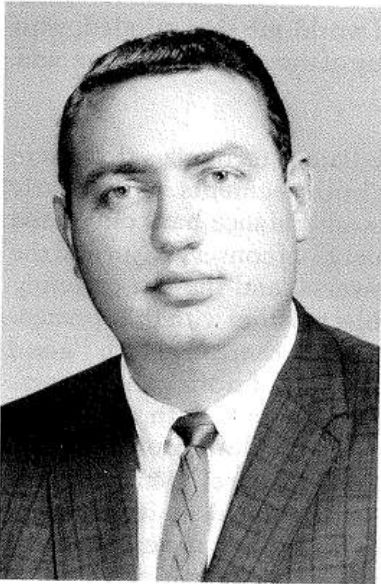
DAN C. COKER

Born in Jones County, Texas, in 1936, Dan is the seventh of eight children. He spent his school boy years in New Mexico and Arizona, where he graduated from Tucson Senior High School in 1954.

He was baptized into Christ by his father, Sid C. Coker, in 1952.

His undergraduate work was done at the University of Arizona, San Antonio College, and Abilene Christian College. He received the B.A. in Bible from ACC in 1960, after a two-year interruption by the United States Army, during which time he also married the former Elise Diane Hicks of Pittsburg, Texas.

He began preaching in 1958, while in the Army, and has missed only three Sundays since.



While preaching and teaching in the Public Schools of Roaring Springs, Texas, he finished an M.A. in New Testament at ACC in 1962.

The following year found him and his wife in Guatemala City, Guatemala, Central America, where they worked five years in missionary efforts under the sponsorship of the College Church of Christ in Abilene. During these years two daughters were born, Danise and Marla.

In September, 1968, he moved his family to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, C.A., where he is engaged in the development

of secondary education with the Florida State Universities system. While supporting himself in this way he also began the Spanish-speaking work in that city.

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Challenges to man's faith are by no means an exclusive of the 20th century, but it does seem that the old fountains of doubt have been reborn with a gush and flurry that make the weak stagger, the doubtful fall, the self-righteous piously indignant, the thoughtful attentive, and the concerned active. The church of our Lord Jesus Christ is seen generally either in one of two camps: the withdrawn, defensive, seldom-questioning the "traditions of the fathers," self-assured and self-satisfied; and the more aggressive, questioning, eager, ecumenical, and world-mission minded, who are not at all satisfied with many of the past traditions and their lack of vision.

Certainly, one must immediately recognize that there are both virtue and danger in both segments, as is nearly always the case. Arguments in abundance have circulated among us expounding the "safety" of conservatism and the "pitfalls" of liberalism or vice-versa, and there is certainly no intention to exhaust the subject further with this presentation, having already concluded that there are both "good and evil" in the thoughts and actions of both movements. Attention is called to the above facts only with the desire to bring to light one undeniable fact: the church of our Lord is often more concerned with the "doctrine" of movements and segments of the kingdom than the basic relationship that every child must have with his Father, a personal and completely trusting faith by which he walks and in which he

has a sure hope. This presentation, then, proposes to touch the faith-chord in every Christian's heart, and ask him, not his "movement" what he is doing with faith's challenges of 1970.

When the world was shocked by a now rather obscure figure of a professor and his declaration "God is Dead," many of the restoration movement were outraged and immediately wanted to put up a defensive battle in God's behalf to destroy this heresy. And yet, after the righteous indignation has subsided, it would now seem imperative that those of us who suffered this experience ask the following question: Was this "heresy" committed by the one who pronounced God dead, or by those of us who had let Him die in our hearts? After our Savior and God died, was buried, and then arose from death and ascended to the right hand of the Father, the Apostle Paul explains to us that the Lord of our life continues to live on earth through and in His people, His body. Perhaps the conclusion of His death was determined by the inactivity of His people's life!

In a less shocking, but toward-the-same-point discourse, J.B. Phillips, in his delightful, yet disturbing collection of essays, *Your God Is Too Small*, does not ask, but affirms that God is dying in the hearts of many. Never does he suggest that God has lost any of His personal stature, but only that men have successfully reduced His effectiveness in their lives by putting Him in a "box" or by making Him a "policeman of the universe" or a "grand old man" or many other ridiculous figures that tend to plague the human race, causing many to have a most distorted concept of the Mighty, the Loving, the All-consuming Majesty and Creator of all things.

I suppose that Dr. Phillips could have raised more ire among many believers if he had named his little book "God is Dying." But that is what he is saying: God is suffering from a "shrinking disease," withering away as does an old man until, it would seem, someday He must die! But He cannot die eternally—He can only die in your heart!!

At this point your writer does not wish to pronounce judgments concerning either a "sickness" or a "death" of God in your lives, hence the question, *a more personal* question: IS your God too small?

The ways in which the Almighty's place might be reduced in the lives of men and women are legion; we shall discuss only one:

### *The Americanized God*

It seems to be a tendency among earth's people to want to capitalize on the nationalistic feelings that run so deeply in their beings, and since religion is also a deep-seated concern in man's life, he often tends to combine the two. Instead of seeking more and more to be molded into the image of God, he falls into the unhappy situation of molding God into his image. This reduces Him to a provincial deity, concerned mostly with the things with which man is concerned, and virtually ignoring those which he ignores. This unfortunate situation, for obvious reasons, is often very hard to recognize by those who are caught up in it. But it must be brought to light and corrected because it has had and continues to have some devastating effects on the church's program both abroad and at home.

The "Americanized God" has certain characteristics that identify Him: He is middle, or upper-middle class and "respectable" as regards church buildings, local hire preachers, and Bible class programs. He convenes with His people twice on Sunday and once on Wednesday, with an additional intensive effort for one week each year.

This deity whom we have fashioned in our image has also become an export product. Because of the emphasis that has been placed on world missions since World War II, the church of Christ in America has become increasingly interested in taking Christ to the nations; thank God for that! With the advent of this praiseworthy zeal, men and women began to dedicate, first, "their lives"; later, "ten years"; and then finally, when the fervor had dropped to an all-time low, it was reasoned that "from two to five years is enough for anybody." In many cases the erstwhile admirable desire to "take Christ" to the world converted into a deep resentment for any part of the world that was not America.

Countless men and women have puzzled over the "why" to the above dilemma; some answers have been attempted, and considerable good has been done to correct the situation. During the six and one-half years that I have been in Latin America, this problem has been a constant challenge to solve. (The reader is asked at this point to kindly bear with the personal experience approach with which I have endeavored and shall endeavor to solve the puzzle.)

I believe that personal experience is one of the best sources at this point because the churches of Christ have not catalogued any previous advice-giving experiences about the work in Central America, for the simple reason that

there was no work done. This, I feel, is one of the basic reasons for many of the errors we have committed: the simple fact that this generation is pioneering Central America (and many other areas of the world) and has no legacy upon which to build. It is certain that several protestant denominations have been in Latin America for many years (the Presbyterian church has been in Central America for over 100 years) but one of the traditions of the churches of Christ is to never consult a religious neighbor "out of the fold," so most of us spent quite a bit of time and money learning what *they found out long ago*. Many of them have written books to facilitate our learning of these vital facts, but another "tradition" seems to be that we shall read nothing except *our* literature. I am happy to report that some of *our* men are now writing on the subject of missions.

But what do the "Americanized God," renewed and then reduced missionary fervor, and a lack of communication and preparation have in common? Much in every way! Because of the lack of communication with, and information about, the target country of our missionary endeavor, we often commit a great blunder by thinking that these people just "need what we have." Usually this is definitely *not* the needs of the people, so they simply reject what is offered and this naturally dampens the spirit of the missionary who has "sacrificed so much" to go to the lost of the world.

Let me make very clear that I am of the firm conviction that those of us who are heirs of the restoration movement have been well-intentioned in our missionary outreach, always with the desire to do good, never with a desire to do harm. But we have made many mistakes through ignorance. It is not necessarily a shame to have been ignorant of cer-

tain things, but it will be a shame if we remain in such a state. One of our greatest mistakes, both in foreign policy and missionary activity, has been the promotion of systems "made in U.S.A."

While I feel that each passing year finds me more and more patriotic, and the sight of "Old Glory" on foreign soil thrills my heart and fills me with an undaunted pride in my country—the greatest and most powerful in the world—I still have learned to recognize a basic weakness in our dealings with Latin Americans. It gave me no real surprise when Governor Rockefeller was jeered and rejected and I find nothing particularly astonishing when our missionaries are treated the same, although usually in a much more subtle way. The reason is as simple and as complicated as this: Our neighbors want brotherhood and cooperation, not a form of fatherly advice coupled with a coerced (directly or indirectly) acceptance of the "American" way and thought.

But this is what we often unwittingly do—all the while thinking "this is best." There are many complications and hard-to-explain situations that cause the Latin "mentality" to in one way or another reject our good intentions. We shall discuss their mentality, but first let's analyze ours.

Often our criteria for judging the success or failure of a mission effort are so couched in our American brotherhood traditions that we are completely unaware that our conclusions are drawn based primarily on these conditions. Allow me to illustrate: When one visits a work in a foreign field he usually looks for things that are "just like back in the States." Therefore, if the building is nice, if the people sing well, if the order of service is about the same, if the

Lord's Supper is dispatched reverently, if the preacher gives an American-type presentation, and if everything is reasonably orderly, the work is judged as a success. If you doubt that this is the case, let me assure you that it is no exaggeration. As a classic example, a much respected elder friend of mine who was visiting a South American church, said to me, "That young man can really preach; why he had Acts 2:38 written on the board! But he doesn't look like a preacher the way he is dressed. I'm going to buy him a suit of clothes so he will look like a preacher."

The above minor incident is an example of an opinion that often has major consequences. Our concept of God is so limited to our practices and rituals that we feel as if we have arrived at the pattern of Christian programs and are somewhat taken aback by any deviation from that norm, even in very insignificant matters that have no doctrinal implications whatsoever. I'll never forget the time when, after having found a group of people who on their own had found the New Testament path of Christianity, one of our mission team remarked, "Now if we could only get them to change the sign on their building — that's the only fault they have." The sign read "God's Church."

The greatest example of this provincial God complex in my life involves the way I felt before and after encountering an old man who sought only to read and teach the word of God. As I look back now I realize to my own shame that I was very suspicious of him, and even searched for some flaw in his story; in fact, I was hoping that I could find something that would justify an attack on his camp so I could prove him wrong! After all, no one from either Texas or Tennessee had baptized him, so I was not sure that



he was baptized at all. But this fine old soul was patient with me, and, as if reading my mind, said, "No, you didn't witness my obedience, but then, I didn't witness yours either. I accept you as my brother because you say you have obeyed the Lord, and there is only one Lord." Needless to say, this took the wind out of my sails. Then a terrifying thought ran through my head! Had I been actually encouraging people to do the very thing I was in theory condemning? I had said many times that one should not obey sectarianism, only the Lord. Yet it seemed that I was frantically recruiting members for "my group" not willing to accept that God could work His wonders without our organizational help. You can't imagine how many questions began to run through my mind as I stared into the wise old man's smiling face. "Did I really think that the Lord had worked only in the U.S.? Did I actually believe that the church had its beginning there and was just now extending its borders to the rest of the world?" I felt foolish and ashamed as I realized that the most important criterion for fellowship among us is to see that one is baptized by one of "ours." While questions and a few answers raced through my mind, only one query formed itself on my lips, "What do you people call yourselves?" "Why, Christians, of course; that's the Biblical name." From that moment on I felt that I, not he, had experienced a conversion of sorts, and it was a pleasure to call him "my brother" and "Christian." I both smiled and shook my head as I remembered the awkward way most of us in the States try desperately to explain that we are a "member of the church of Christ" or even that we are "a church of Christ" instead of employing the simple, Biblical terminology that our brother used. I think maybe I felt some of the surprise and slight bewilderment of the Apostle Peter when he first realized that God had talked with a Gentile.

In my several years of work among the churches of Central America I have noticed glaring contrasts between those churches which have been heavily influenced by the American missionaries and others, because of geographical circumstances, seldom visited. Naturally, it would be expected that the churches with the most missionary influence would be the largest and most stable. At this point, however, one must decide what will be his criteria to determine "church stability." If stability is defined as having a nice church building, then the U.S. influenced congregation has the advantage; or if it is determined by having full-time supported preachers, social gatherings, well-dressed people and publicity, then the same is true. But, are these the things that count? Let's be honest, *they are* usually the things that "count" to us because we are impressed by them and feel comfortable in this familiar environment! But, is this also God's opinion? The Prophet Samuel had something to say to King Saul along that particular line.

If by contrast a work is to be judged by personal growth, dedication to the Lord's will, unquenchable faith and work for the kingdom, I must conclude that many of the less-attended congregations seem to be more successful. What does this suggest? That Americans are bad for the Lord's missionary efforts, and, therefore, should stay away completely? Absolutely not! It simply indicates that along with the good that was being done among both kinds of churches mentioned there was a great amount of American tradition "rubbing off" that often was detrimental to the work. The following example should illustrate what is meant:

Our custom in the United States is to say that the Lord's Supper is the focal point of our Sunday meeting and

then hastily dispense with it to get on to the *real* main attraction, the morning sermon. This unintentional discrepancy is "faithfully" executed among the more attended missionary points, where the bread and juice are distributed with laudible "Yanqui" style, order, and dispatch, and it seems that it means more to them than it does to us.

I'll never forget a trip I made to one of the "less-fortunate" churches which I visited only about once each month, on Saturday. I had never been in a "Sunday service" with this congregation before, and thought that I needed to go check on the proceedings to "make their faith sure." I did not write them of my coming, I simply appeared in their one-room building they had constructed out of poles and palm leaves. When I arrived their faces brightened and they immediately extended me an invitation to direct their services that morning. With much persuasion, I convinced them that I would like to just observe as one of the members in the crowded room.

After waiting about 40 minutes past the scheduled time, a sizeable group gathered, many standing or sitting on the floor. Somewhat annoyed by the delay, I waited impatiently and then beheld a marvelous procedure: Almost every man present selected and directed a hymn, usually off-key, but with a radiance of spirit that made chills of joy fill my being. In preparation for the Lord's Supper several spoke and prayed—for about an hour. Many wept as I did, and when the emblems were served they truly were, in our hearts, the Lord's sacrifice; I feel that from that moment I began to partake of the body and blood of Jesus, not just "bread" and "wine"—maybe that was the *first time*. As I walked back down the mountain that day, I thanked God that I had not been "available" to teach them the hurried

and sometimes empty ritual of bread and wine that we exercise through habit, and that His divine word had guided them to discover a beauty and appreciation I had previously missed.

Besides the influences in the order of worship, the time allotted to each activity, the emphasizing of some activities and the ignoring (or practically so) of others, I consider even more damaging to the spiritual life of some of our mission efforts the "spirit of fatherhood" we bring with the "Americanized church" (I shall use this expression instead of "Americanized God" because perhaps by now we have realized that one cannot truly Americanize the Lord, but only His church). I fully realize how we verbally condemn the practices of some of our religious neighbors for talking of the "Mother Church" and the "fatherhood" of the papacy. I also realize that we would be appalled if one of our missionaries were to instruct the locals of his mission to call him "father." But, we seem to suffer no outrage at all when one merely acts like a "father" and subtly teaches all his "children" to depend on him as a father. The point is, we don't elevate the man through titles such as "father" or "pastor" or "reverend" (although we do tend to do this with "the preacher" and "the minister"), we merely assume the role without the title. We simply need to make up our minds which we intend to establish: a paternal order or a brotherhood.

The above statement over-simplifies the problem, I know, but it does at least identify the root of the matter. In most cases, there is no malicious intent to dominate these people as if they were children; it seems that many just take for granted that they need this type supervision. After all, doesn't everyone realize that the best way of doing

things is the American way? Let me assure you that it is not the best in *many* situations.

Attempting to bring the American church building, program, and local preacher systems to many of these countries involves one of at least two alternatives: (1) Prepare for many decades of continued financial support for the perpetuation of these institutions (which invariably leads to a paternal dependence upon the sponsoring church and virtual economic slavery) or (2) give the "one-shot" gifts to "set them up" and then let them handle their own affairs, sink or swim. (In this case, one had better prepare to see quite a bit of "sinking.") The latter alternative is usually the one proposed, but almost invariably the first is actually followed. If you doubt this, please talk with different groups of elders in Texas churches that have been active in these programs for several years.

As has been stated, the idea of "giving the mission a start" with buildings and preacher support is nearly always the proposed plan, and this plan sounds very good on the surface. Why, then, does the plan nearly always fall into the seemingly necessary continual support of these missions, not for a few years, but for many years and with no end in sight? There are many reasons, and we shall discuss a few:

### *Banquet and Famine*

Often the "one-shot" treatment is like taking a poor man to a banquet and then expecting him to continue the same type feasting every day. He will want to continue, but it is useless to think that being exposed to one banquet will change his daily eating habits. Wouldn't it be more reason-

able to help such a man understand how he might use his own resources to develop more nutritious and hygienic meals for his family? It is a proven fact that many in Central America suffer from malnutrition simply because they do not know how to effectively use the food that surrounds them. They certainly don't need canned and frozen food from the United States on which to gorge themselves once a year; they need knowledge!

### *Boss Complex*

Allow me to explain just a little bit of Spanish and what it means to the Spanish-speaking person. The "sponsoring church" of the United States, when it is supporting a mission church, is referred to by the Spanish-speaking people as *la iglesia patrocinadora*. The word *patrocinadora* clearly shows its origin in the same root as does the word *patron*, which means "boss." The reader can readily appreciate the fact that the first 5 letters of the two words are exactly alike, and let me assure you that there is little difference in what the two words mean to the Latin American. Oh, I know full well that perhaps no one would ever translate *iglesia patrocinadora* as "boss church," we have the more common expression "sponsoring church," but the end result is the same in the minds of our Latin neighbors. The sponsoring church becomes the "boss church"—not because she wants to, but because the mission church wants her to. Many, many examples of how this relationship stunts the spiritual and numerical growth of mission churches could be cited, but perhaps the following will serve as an example to show how far the "boss church" idea has gone in some areas: On one occasion in a church several years old in

Latin America, men wanted to put a newtype of lighting in the building, but no move could be made until they checked with the *iglesia patrocinadora* for permission and financing. It was a matter of about \$25. I remember very well that as a child I would always try to save my nickels and dimes if my dad was around to pick up the bill; it works beautifully!

### *Don't Work if You're Not Paid*

One of the most successful doctrines we have carried with us to Latin America is "the worker is worthy of his salary." I think we have had 100% success in convincing the native preachers that it's all right for them to be paid; in fact, we missionaries seem to be so sold on the teaching that we have convinced first ourselves and then them that one should *demand* to be paid for his work. I know of no other single thing that has caused more contention between the locals and the missionaries than salaries being paid to the native preachers by the church in the United States. This solitary practice has produced repeated jealousy, laziness, and strife among several churches with which I am personally acquainted.

To explain why this is the case, let me describe the situation in the following hypothesis: Let us suppose we are all rather poor, we have no steady work and often we are in need of better clothes and food, but we haven't the money to buy them. But we are relatively happy, and we accept our lot in life, not bitterly, but with expectations of better things to come. We are Christians and we are happy in our faith and give glory to God for His goodness in giving us the rain and sun and the necessities of life.

Then, some very rich men come into our town. These men, because they are kind, give us a new building in which we have worship services; we are grateful for their generosity, but somewhat embarrassed that we haven't even the money to pay the monthly utility bills. But we accept their monthly contribution for this need with appreciation — after all, they are spending their money on us! After a time, one of our number is selected (not by us — by *them*) to be our preacher. He is a bright young man, and we are happy for him. Also, we are assured that his salary will come from the rich men so as not to cause any extra burden to our already strained budget. We are glad, and we feel a pride in having "our preacher" just like "everyone else."

Months go by and all seems well. Then, we begin to notice that "our preacher" is gaining weight; he lives in a newer house; he has several suits of fine clothes. He seems to be chosen by the "rich ones" to be favored among us, and suddenly he who once worked as we do is now receiving five times as much money as before, and seems to be doing less work!

Time goes by and we begin to be verbally chastened for not doing more work in the church. But we haven't the time, and, besides, the "favored one" has all day long to do that — we have to *work* for our money.

The above chain of events might seem unreal to an American audience for the simple reason that the preacher's position is not usually coveted by the members in that his financial state is not that exalted. Let me assure you, however, that it is certainly a financially exalted post in most mission churches! The above situation is not imaginary, but all too disastrously real and frequent.



There are, of course, exceptions to the above, but the "rule" has taken a heavy toll among us. I have witnessed the painful process of some of our most capable preachers converted to the American dollar; I have been party to it, not maliciously, but ignorantly. The most eloquent Central American I ever knew was schooled and supported handsomely by us Americans, and this I witnessed to be the path by which he was to fall. Preaching in Central America lost its appeal to him, and the passions of life took the place of his first love. As fervently as he had once preached, he later lied, cheated and robbed others. The last time I saw him, he was in the Central Penitentiary for theft. His is not an isolated case; if it were, it would not be mentioned.

The above American traditions have served unwittingly to spiritually reduce the stature of God to that of Uncle Sam and paradoxically enlarge His "riches" in the physical realm. Have we made God an undesirable spiritual dwarf and an unattainable and unapproachable giant of affluency? Have we made Him too small by making Him too big?

We must put the emphasis back on giving Christ, not a "Church of Christ" made in the U.S.A., to the world. We confuse the issue and defeat our purpose by molding men into loyal American church fans, thus putting the head in a secondary position to the body. Many of the mission churches are not spiritually minded for the simple reason that we have not been spiritually minded among them. We have talked more of buildings, a well-dressed ministry and "respectability" so that it should be no surprise to us that these become their main concern of "church work." I know men and women who believe the Latins are just not capable of spirituality because they continually ask for physical help.

If this be true, it is usually because of the example they have had unwittingly placed before them. Brethren, we reap what we sow! If we are to communicate spiritual conviction and God's eternal love for all men, we ourselves will have to become more spiritual minded and less concerned with the church's physical appearance. This is not a plan to stop the flow of compassion that one Christian feels for another, it is simply an effort to wake us up to the fact that we often do great damage in our desire to do good. Also, if we are trying to make the churches of Christ in Latin America stand out with pretty buildings, we are fighting a losing battle; we haven't the resources to compete with the magnificent edifices of the Roman Catholic Church! It is high time we decided on what grounds we *are* competing.

What, then, do we do? Simply this: We look for a man who wants to do His Will, we accept him as he is, we love him for what he is, we hope for him good fortune in his life, we help him in time of sickness and great distress, we realize that we cannot change his total situation, we do not demand that he attain our economical or social status, we join our spirits, we gladly extend to him our hospitality, we are not afraid to accept his. In short, we wish to produce in him a spiritual man who can develop himself in his own environment without the distractions and pitfalls of ours. We go to him on his terms, not on ours; the spiritual terms take care of themselves, for they are the Lord's.

Reaching the lost, then, is taking the Lord to them in their territory and in their environment, if indeed, we believe that God is that big. I have heard of men and women whose hearts were as "big as all outdoors," and that is good. But if you are to take the true God to lost nations,

your heart must be even larger and greater, or else it will not house the Creator of the Universe. God is so big, so powerful, so universal, that I doubt seriously if He would want to dwell in a heart that bows to man's tradition, throbs only with nationalistic pride, or faints at the sight of humble brethren.

As far as I know God is not Anglo-Saxon, an habitual English speaker, nor a member of the Republican party. He is the all-consuming force of Love that fills the hearts of mortals who can embrace shoulders that wear a different colored skin, bow in prayer with one who speaks an unfamiliar language, eat the food of poverty prepared by gnarled hands, walk the paths of hard labor with one who knows them all too well, look into the misty eyes of one who is God's creation, a precious soul, more worthy than the world's untold riches, and give to such a person the equality and dignity of brotherhood.

My brethren, the above situation cannot be realized between a rich, white American and a poor, brown Latin—it can only come about between two Christians. Only one is big enough to work these wonders: Slave and master are one, male and female are perfectly joined, Jew and Gentile become a single spirit. Who is He? Choose one of the following:

1. Uncle Sam
2. Alexander Campbell
3. Jesus the Christ

By: Dan C. Coker  
Tegucigalpa, Honduras, C.A.

## SALVATION BY CRUCIFIXION

### HUMPHREY FOUTZ

Humphrey Foutz was born at Mexia, Texas, on February 1, 1933. He began preaching in 1954 at Dallas, Texas.

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A few months ago a group of pacifists began one of the strangest roll calls in history. For days they read name after name. Each name was male, each name was service-connected. They were attempting to dramatize the ravages of war upon our young people. Reflecting for just a moment one would suppose this to have been a scene evoking pathos. The dominant reaction, though, was not pathos but anger, blinding, bitter anger and controversy. Pictures of this were carried on television and, in newspapers throughout the country.



The solemn intonement of the names of bat-

tle casualties seemed to be an abrasively irritating experience. Many persons refused to listen and hated the sound of it. The reaction is understandable. We do not like to be reminded of the suffering in this world because of man's inhumanity to man. There is a similarity there in our approach to Jesus. And so we make our crosses beautiful and our concept of Christ is almost feminine. We seem bent upon forgetting that the cross was a terrible means of execution. This crucifying men was bloody business indeed. Today in our drawing room, prestige seeking, Madison Avenue approach to Christ and his way, not only is the atrocity of Calvary far removed, but we are often too delicate in our sensitivities to face the facts of the occasion. Despite our squeamishness and the sentimentality so often affected, the incidents of Golgotha were ugly, bloody business. Matthew describes the affair. "Then when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Skull Hill) they offered him a drink of wine mixed with some bitter drug, but when he had tasted it he refused to drink." (Matt. 27:33, 34 — Phillips). Then from midday until three o'clock darkness spread over the whole countryside, and then Jesus cried with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why did you forsake me?" (vs. 46). But the others said: "Let him alone! Let's see if Elijah will come and serve him. But Jesus gave one more great cry, and died" (vrs. 49, 50).

This is the cross which stands at the very center of the Gospel of Christ. Paul describes it in these words: "Moreover brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand. By which also ye are saved, If ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the

scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:1-3), or again in I Cor. 2:2, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." This suffering and death meant so much to the early church that preachers such as Peter and Paul began their preaching of the gospel here, for in these events men found not only the meaning of Christ, but the meaning of their own sufferings, and death as well. They suffered with Christ even as he had suffered for them. As Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me..." (Gal. 2:20). Let us take a fresh look at that Business at Calvary. This was so awful a crime that little worse can be said of man than that he is capable of doing this to the innocent. Even Pontius Pilate, crafty old politician, astute in the working of power, still was ambitious enough to desire tranquillity even if meant killing the innocent. So he went through the act of washing his hands and proclaiming his innocence in the whole matter. As this occurred, emotionally overcharged crowds, sensing the blood of a victim and like hounds yelping with their quarry at bay, cried, "*His blood be on us, and on our children*" (Matt. 27:25).

This has been called the loneliest death in all history. Jesus had been rejected by his nation. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jno. 1:11). The synagogue had rejected him as a heretic. Matthew tells us they accused Jesus of blasphemy (Matt. 26:65). Even prior to this the covenant for murder was made (Matt. 26:1-5). The Roman soldiers spit upon him (Matt. 27:29, 30). The crowd jeered at him, perhaps the same crowd who cried Hosannas a few days before. Where were his friends? They forsook him. The disciples were not there, but the women

remained to the end. They saw and heard the entire spectacle.

The idea of crucifixion is repugnant to us. We ordinarily seek to identify with Jesus or at least the disciples who fearfully deserted him. I suspect, though, that there is another factor in this tragedy with whom we may more closely identify. Those who said, "His blood be on us and on our children." A literal statement? Perhaps, but let it suggest a deeper meaning for us today.

Each generation of men comes forth with its hammer, nails, crown, and thorns, ready to crucify Jesus afresh. To be sure, our weapons may not be so crude as hammer and nails. Perhaps we will use napalm, bombs, flame throwers, and chemical defoliants to bring death and destruction to men for whom Jesus died. There is nothing that limits this to first-century Jerusalem. And so we crucify Christ afresh.

There were the hypocrisies of the Scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day. They were dedicated to a legalism that corrupted everything they touched. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Matt. 23: 15). They were concerned about their traditions. Their patterns or systems were sacred. Jesus can get in the way of our traditions and creeds, written or unwritten. We know what he can do for a tradition. Look at how many dual programs he has compelled us to support. We are still largely creatures of tradition. This is the way it has always been done, this is the way it has always been said, so this is the way it is going to stay. And so we crucify Christ afresh.

And then there is this business of pride. Nowhere is

it more destructive than in an inordinate race pride that issues in a "superior people complex." We are the Holy German nation. "We are the pure white one hundred percent Americans."

...The late Ralph McGill in his book "A Church, A School" describes a 100 percent American. "By paying a necessary sum a fellow can become a 100 percent American. The Klu Klux mentality prostitutes the Christian religion by making over the New and Old Testaments into a KKK revised version. This justifies hate and twists the great commandment to love thy neighbor as thyself to apply only to 100 percent Americans, excluding most Protestants, all Roman Catholics and Jews, and all blacks. To the Kluxer mentality the communion cup must be a Dixie cup." <sup>1</sup>

We are the pure white skins or we are the pure black skins. Someone tells the story of the occasion when the French colonizers first came to Africa. The natives would stand around and watch the French soldiers strut and parade with their swagger sticks and pomp and pageantry. Finally, the natives were made a part of the military there and issued uniforms. One of the most humorous sights in camp were the native soldiers, uniform glistening, swagger stick in hand, trying to strut like the Frenchman. White racism has cursed this land from the beginning and now blacks are imitating the worst traits to be found in our land. Eventually men are driven to violence by these notions, attempting to defend the threat, real or imaginary, to this inordinate race pride. Do you remember the Presidential commission to

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<sup>1</sup> See McGill, Ralph, *A Church, A School*, (Nashville, Tenn. Abingdon Press, 1959), p. 22



investigate the causes of the riots of 1967? They concluded that a major factor was white racism. Ridiculous; there is nothing racist in recognizing that white skin is evidence of superiority! Now we have the spectacle of black racism. Will we ever learn the meaning of reconciliation? And so we crucify Christ afresh.

The cross was bloody business, yet in it we find a hope, a promise, an inspiration that cannot be tarnished. There was a power in the business of Calvary that exceeds anything that the human eye could see there on that day. From every human point of view it looked like failure. A huge colossal failure. Had he not come to seek and save? Had he not come to establish a kingdom? Had he not sought to bring Jerusalem into a right relationship with Jehovah? Now it is Friday night and Jesus is dead. Who could have known that the future belonged to the executed rather than the executioner.

Christ elevated man's position on the scale of human existence in his crucifixion by the very fact that he would die for men.

...Dr. Harry E. Fosdick tells the story of a humanist scholar, a fugitive from France, who fell ill in Lombardy, and looking like a vagabond in rags, asked aid of the doctors. The physicians discussed his case in Latin, not thinking that this bedraggled pauper could understand the learned tongue. *Faciamus experimentum in animavili*, they said, "Let us try an experiment with this worthless creature." And to their amazement the "worthless creature" spoke to them in Latin: *Vilem animam appellas pro qua Christus non de-*

*dignatus est mori?* "Will you call worthless one for whom Christ did not disdain to die? <sup>2</sup>

Let that idea take hold of us and we cannot help but be better men for it. Christ died for us, that we might be saved!

God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself (II Cor. 5:19). Man was alienated from God by the guilt of sin. Now he can be reconciled because of Calvary. Paul says he was, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14). The law was a divider or partition that separated Jew and Gentile. If man would be reconciled it had to go. This was abrogated because of Calvary.

Christ would reconcile man to God and to one another. "You were without Christ; you were utter strangers to God's chosen community, the Jews; and you had no knowledge of, or right to, the promised agreements. You had nothing to look forward to and no God to whom you could turn. But now, through the blood of Christ, you who were once outside the pale are with us inside the circle of God's love and purpose" (Eph. 2:12, 13 Phillips).

Then the cross is a demand. "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). Let us be honest in stating what it

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<sup>2</sup> See Fosdick, Harry E., *The Cross An Amazing Paradox*, (New York; Harper and Brothers, 1958) p. 320

means to take up a cross, even when we refuse to do it. It is not a fate endured, but a mission undertaken. It is not something we bear because fate decreed it, but something we choose because we love Jesus and want to serve him.

To take up a cross, then, is to give oneself to some labor of love and remain faithful even in the face of ridicule, rebuke, and rejection; to commit ourselves to the service of Jehovah totally and remain faithful to that commitment throughout our lives.

There is a story of the day when there was a vast throng before the judgment throne of God. As He began to pronounce His judgments, a wail of protest went up from the people. Unfair! What right did He have to pass judgment upon man's life on this earth? He was God! What could He know of the agony of human pain and fear and temptation? What knowledge did He have of the suffering which could result from chance and circumstance or the accident of birth?

From the midst of the crowd a voice cried, "If He would judge us, let Him be born on earth and see what it is like!" Soon there were many voices shouting; "Yeah, let Him be born to poverty to live among the have-nots. Let Him belong to a minority race and see what prejudice is like! Let Him learn the heart-break in a friend's betrayal or a broken trust. Let Him see what it's like to be at the mercy of those who act on hearsay and rumor! Let Him look into the eyes of arrogant hatred and suffer the violence of a mob! Yeah, let Him find out about human life before He judges us..."

But then the screams began to give way to a strange

silence for somewhere, someone had called out the name of Jesus Christ. One by one they began to realize that this is what had been. Jesus had been born to this earth, and of a minority race. He had known poverty and the sweat of hard work. He had suffered betrayal and knew what it was to be in the hands of those who despised him. He had looked into the eyes of hatred, had heard the voice of the mob and the roar of a riot. He had suffered the bloody business of a cross, had known what it was to die. God in Christ had known human life to its depths.

And yet He would not give up on us. As it is written in the Epistle to the Romans (5:8), "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." He thought we were worth it.

## THE BODY OF CHRIST

ROY H. LANIER, SR.

Roy H. Lanier, Sr. was born in Montague County, Texas in 1899; grew up in Washita County, Oklahoma and graduated from high school in 1918; entered Abilene Christian College in the fall of that year and graduated in the spring of 1922. He began preaching in 1916; worked his way through college, much of his support coming from churches where he preached on Sundays, Haskell, Throckmorton and Robert Lee being his principal support for two years.

For about fifteen years after graduation he preached for churches in Texas, Colorado, and New Mexico. For the next sixteen years he held meetings in about forty states. He served two colleges as head of the Bible department for a period of years. He now serves as Dean and teacher in the Bear Valley School of Preaching in Denver, Colorado.



Perhaps his greatest contribution to the Cause of Christ has been in the field of writing. For three years his writings appeared on the front page of the *Gospel Light*, published in Delight, Arkansas. For the next fifteen years he contributed regularly to the *Gospel Advocate*, published in Nashville, Tennessee. During this time he wrote eleven volumes of the *Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary*; edited three series of *Vacation Bible School* material; and wrote eight books in his *Faith Building Series*. For the last eight years he has contributed regularly to the *Firm Foundation*, published in Austin, Texas, under the heading of *Problem Page*. His

book of *Outlines of Bible History*, 132 lessons, published in 1942 is still in print. He published a series of ten tracts in 1941, another series of twenty-one in 1959, the latter series now being published by Gussie Lambert Publications, Shreveport, La. His total contribution amounts to about 700 articles for papers and seventy books and tracts during the last forty years.

He was married to Curtyce Mitchell in 1923, and to this union three children were born, Gay, Joy, and Roy, Jr. The latter has been preaching since 1946 and now serves the church in Midwest City, Oklahoma.

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There is no truth more clearly stated in all the Bible than that the church our Lord built is the body of Christ. Paul said that when Jesus was taken into heaven he was given to "be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22, 23). Again Paul says, "And he is the head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18). And in Col. 1:24, we find the same truth affirmed.

Since there is no doubt that the body of Christ is his church, we wish to learn the meaning of the term "body." Certainly it cannot in this context mean the glorified body of Jesus which is said to be at the right hand of the Father. In this use of the word it can mean only a group of people. We use it in this way when we speak of the school board as being a body. The Congress of the United States is an august body of men. This great gathering of people tonight may be spoken of as a body of people met for the purpose of worshipping God. So the church of our Lord is that body, group, of people called out of the world for

the purpose of carrying on the work of the Lord in the world while keeping themselves from becoming identified with the world.

But why is the church called the body of Christ? The phrase "of Christ," being in the genitive case denotes possession. It is the body which belongs to Christ. It is that group of people in the world which Christ possesses. And he possesses them because he purchased them with his blood. Paul told the Ephesian elders to "feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). In Eph. 5:25, we are told that Jesus "loved the church, and gave himself up for it," while in Titus 2:14, we are told that "he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works." Putting these two verses together we learn that Jesus gave himself up for the church that he might redeem it from iniquity and have a people, the church, for his own possession. So the body of Christ is his church, that group of people on the earth which he has bought, redeemed with his blood. All men belong to him by right of creation and preservation (Col. 1:16, 17), but only the church of our Lord belongs to him by right of redemption. This means that the church is a redeemed people, a blood-bought and a blood-washed throng. While other groups of people may be called bodies, none can rightly be called the body of Christ except that body which has been purchased by the blood of Christ. Honor and fame may be attached to membership in many bodies of this world, but salvation and glorification for all eternity are found only in that body which belongs to our Lord. Let none look lightly, much less with contempt, upon the body of Christ, the church which he purchased with his blood and which he will pre-

sent to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints (Eph. 5:27; 2 Thess. 1:10).

We turn, now, to learn something of the nature of the body of Christ. Let us say first that it is a heaven-born body. It did not originate in the minds of men, to satisfy the desires of men, or to contribute to the glory of men. It originated in the mind of God before time began; it is the fulness of him who fills all in all (Eph. 1:23). Paul tells us that God chose us from before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blemish (Eph. 1:4), and he tells us that it is the church, the body of Christ, which is to be holy and without blemish. So the church, the body of Christ, is that group of people whom the Lord chose before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish. Jesus was the lamb of God, foreknown before the foundation of the world as such (1 Pet. 1:20). Is it possible that Jesus could be foreknown as a lamb to be offered for the sins of the world and yet it was not foreknown that his blood would purchase the church? Again, Paul speaks of the eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph. 3:11). This purpose, or mystery, was not known in generations before the first century as it came to be revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Holy Spirit, how that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel (Eph. 3:4-6). So it was a part of God's eternal purpose that Jews and Gentiles should be fellow-members of the same body, and that body is the church. Hence the church, the body of Christ, had a large place in the eternal purpose of God.



Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10), but the church is composed of the saved (Acts 2:47); so Jesus came into the world to build his church. When he was facing the cross, he asked, "What shall I say? Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour?" His answer was, "No, it was for this very cause that I came to this hour" (John 12:27). He came into the world to die for the sins of the world, but it was in his death that he purchased his church. Hence he came into the world to purchase his church. So we must conclude that the church originated in the mind of God and that Jesus came into the world to purchase it.

The church is not only heaven-born, but is a heaven-directed body. Christ is its Head (Col. 1:18). He directs the activities of his body as the human head directs the activities of the human body. "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church. . . . But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their own husbands in everything" (Eph. 5:23, 24). Here we have two illustrations. The first tells us that Jesus is related to his church like the head is related to the human body. The next tells us that Jesus is related to his church like the husband is related to his wife. But since Jesus has returned to heaven, we can say that the body of Christ gets its directions from heaven. Of course these directions come to us through his revealed will, the New Testament. He told his apostles he had many things to say to them which they could not then receive, but he would send the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth. The Holy Spirit would not speak from himself, but he would take of Jesus those things Jesus could not then tell them (John 16:12-15). So everything the Holy Spirit gave the apostles and prophets of Jesus to write came from Jesus. Through the words of these apostles and prophets Jesus is still giv-

ing the body, and every member in particular, directions for work and worship, and how to live a holy life. We do not look to men for our directions, neither Editors, College Presidents, Synods nor conventions; we look to Jesus Christ and to him alone for our directions.

Concerning the nature of this body let us also say that its members are heavenly minded. Everyone who is a member of Christ's body has been born anew, born of water and the Spirit (John 3:3, 5). He is a new creature with a new purpose in life, to live for the Christ who died for him (2 Cor. 5:9, 15, 17). Every member in the body of Christ who has been buried with Christ by baptism into death to sin, has been raised together with Christ to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3, 4), and has set his affections on things above and not on the things that are upon the earth (Col. 3:1, 2). He has, therefore, put to death his members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, and has put away anger, wrath, malice, railing, and shameful speaking; he has put off the old man with his doings and has put on the new man that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him. He has put on a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing and forgiving others as Christ has forgiven him; and above all he has put on love which is the bond of perfectness (Col. 3:1-14). The mind which was in Christ Jesus is in him, causing him to do nothing through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind he considers others better than himself, not looking to his own things only, but also looking out for the well-being of his fellowmen, especially other members of the body of Christ (Phil. 2:2-5). He realizes that the body of Christ is not one mem-

ber, but many, and that God has set them in the body as it has pleased him, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all the members should suffer with it; if one member is honored, all members rejoice with the one honored (1 Cor. 12:12-26). A person who is worldly minded, seeking his own good and glory at the expense of others, would be as much out of place in the body of Christ as a pig's snout would be out of place on the human face. Only those who are heavenly minded can fit comfortably into that body which has Jesus as its Head.

Next, let us learn something of this spiritual body bought with the blood of our Lord. Of what is it composed? First, we speak of its glorious Head. We have noticed passages which speak of Jesus as the head of the church which is his body; he is head of the body, the church (Eph. 1:23; Col. 1:18). If the head of a human body is malformed, or is without intelligence, we may pity it but we can never honor it or value it highly. So if the body of Christ has an earthly, faulty, impotent head, we could never respect and honor that body. If the body is honored and respected in keeping with that which the head deserves, the body of Christ is entitled to unlimited and unending honor, praise, and glory. The Head of this body is none other than Jesus, the true God (1 Jno. 5:20). He is the Word that was with God in the beginning, the Word that was God, who was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:1, 14). He is that angel who appeared to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai and told him to take off his shoes because the ground was made holy by his

presence; who said to Moses, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Acts 7:30-32). According to John 12:41, the Head of this body is Jehovah whom Isaiah saw, high and lifted up, whose train filled the temple, and of whom seraphim said, "Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:1-3). The Head of the body of which you and I are privileged to be members is that one who was on equality with God, but was made a little lower than the angels that he might suffer death, and is now crowned with glory and honor, highly exalted by the Father and given a name that is above every name, to which every knee shall bow and which every tongue shall confess as Lord to the glory of the Father (Phil. 2:5-10; Heb. 2:9). Truly this is a glorious Head that crowns with glory and honor that body over which it presides.

Next, it must be said that there is but one head to preside over the body of Christ. Surely no man is worthy to share this glorious position with our wonderful Lord. This would mean that sinful man is exalted to a place of equality with God, or that God is lowered to equality with man. Furthermore, the body of Christ is not a monstrosity; it does not have two heads, one on earth and one in heaven. Nor is there any need for two heads, one earthly and one heavenly, for Jesus our Head fills both requirements. He is God-man. He is divine and human; he is heavenly and earthly; eternal Son of eternal Father, but Son of man born of a woman, the seed of David.

Nor does this Head, though glorious and wonderful, preside over more than one body. More than four hundred religious bodies claim Jesus as Head, but pay no attention

to his teaching that there is but one body (1 Cor. 12:20). They would make the body of Christ the greatest monstrosity humanity has ever known, a spiritual creation consisting of four hundred bodies with but one Head. They would have us believe that this one Head gives conflicting and contradictory directions to these four hundred bodies.

To the church at Corinth Paul said, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof" (1 Cor. 12:27). Notice that the local congregation in Corinth is called the body of Christ in that locality. It is no more the entire body of Christ than it is the entire church of Christ; but it is the body of Christ in that locality as it is the church of Christ in that place. The entire congregation is the body of Christ, but severally, or separately, individually they are members of that body. What a wonderful thing it is; what an honor it is for frail, erring, sinful human beings to enjoy such exaltation to be members of that body over which Jesus is Head! The human body shares the honor of its intelligent head; it suffers the dishonor of its impotent head. So the body of Christ shares the honor and glory of its most glorious Head. Let none look lightly nor speak disparagingly of the church of our Lord, which is the body of Christ, whose members we are.

Next, allow me to dwell upon the manner in which we individuals become members of this spiritual body of Christ. Paul says, "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). Here Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit, through our obedience in baptism, welded, united, us in one body, one living spiritual organism. This is not a reference to Holy Spirit bap-

tism, for Paul tells us there is one baptism (Eph. 4:5). Baptism of the Spirit is never administered by men, but Paul tells us he baptized some of these Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:14-16). If Paul could administer water baptism only, and he baptized some of these Corinthians, it follows that he baptized them in water. If there is only one baptism, and if Paul administered water baptism to some of them, it follows that the one baptism of the Christian religion is water baptism. But Paul tells them that this one baptism which he administered brought them into one body. Therefore, the water baptism which Paul administered brought these Corinthians into the body of Christ. They became members of the body of Christ when they, by the direction of the Holy Spirit, were baptized into that one body. In another place Paul says we are baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). Baptism into Christ is baptism into the body of Christ. But the baptism which brings one into Christ is described by Paul as a burial and a resurrection to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). Holy Spirit baptism is never referred to as a burial and a resurrection. No one was ever buried into the Spirit and raised up therefrom. But water baptism is a burial in water and a resurrection therefrom. Since the baptism which brings one into Christ, into his body, is a burial and a resurrection from some element, and since water is the only element connected with the Christian religion into which one is buried and from which one is raised, it follows that the baptism which brings one into Christ, into his body, is water baptism.

Again, Jesus commanded his apostles, and all whom they taught, to baptize believers "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19, 20). But since there is one baptism (Eph. 4:5), and since men can administer nothing but water baptism, it

follows that the baptism Jesus told his disciples to administer is water baptism. This is the one baptism Paul administered to some in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:14-16); it is the baptism which brought them into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13); and it is the baptism we must accept today if we wish to come into Christ's glorious body and share with our heavenly Head the glories which he enjoys with his Father (John 17:5, 24).

We come now to think of the blessings enjoyed by those who are in the body of Christ which cannot be enjoyed by those who are not members of this spiritual body. The first blessing we study is that of fellowship with Christ as the Head of the body. Paul drew an analogy between the human body and the body of Christ, the church (1 Cor. 12:12ff). Every member in my physical body is related in some way to my head; so every Christian is related to Jesus Christ. Any object outside of my physical body, regardless of how beautiful or useful it may be, has no relation to my head. So every responsible human being on earth who is not in the body of Christ is unrelated to Christ the Head. This relation we have with Christ is fellowship, communion, with him as our Saviour. Paul teaches us that we are called by God into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor. 1:9). Again, we read, "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). Fellowship with Jesus Christ means that we are at peace with him, that he is our Friend. There is an interchange of affection between those who have fellowship with one another. Those who have fellowship with each other share each other's joys and sorrows, their triumphs and defeats, their honors and dishonors. There is no more exalted privilege, there is no more thrilling joy than to know that we may have fellowship with God the Father and his Son

Jesus Christ. But this is the joy of an elect group of people. Though all humanity is invited to enjoy this fellowship, it remains the portion of that select group of people called the body of Christ to enjoy this spiritual fellowship. Since the body of Christ is the church he built (Col. 1:18), it follows that those who are in his church, and those only, enjoy this sweet communion and thrilling fellowship provided in the body of Christ.

Let it be remembered that those who have no fellowship with the Son have no fellowship with the Father. There is no such thing as denying and rejecting the Son of God and enjoying the fellowship of the Father. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also" (1 John 2:23). Neither can one reject the teaching of Christ and enjoy the fellowship of the Father. "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9). So since no one can have fellowship with Jesus Christ without being in his body which is the church, and no one can have fellowship of the Father without fellowship of the Son, it follows that no one can have fellowship with God the Father unless and until he comes into the body of Christ, the church of Jesus Christ. But we have learned that we enter this body of Christ by submitting to baptism in water in the name of Jesus Christ; there is no other way to enter this spiritual body over which Jesus presides as Head. But if people outside of this body can have no fellowship with God the Father, it follows that no unbaptized responsible person can have fellowship with God the Father unless and until he submits to baptism in water into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). Let no



one think he can ignore the teaching of Jesus Christ as recorded by apostles and prophets in the book we call the New Testament and enjoy fellowship and communion with God the Father. We live in a day when many in the religious world, and even some of my own brethren, doubt the relevance of some of the teaching of Jesus Christ. Jesus declared, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). He sent his apostles into all the world to preach his gospel and to teach baptized people to observe all he commanded them, and then he promised, "and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). He knew the apostles would not live until the end of the world, or age, so his promise simply means that he will be with all who preach his word in purity as long as the world stands. As long as he is with that word you can be assured that it is relevant, and the person who rejects it will be denied the fellowship of both the Father and the Son.

Again, we refer to Paul's analogy between the human body and the body of Christ. As the human body is alive and active when the human spirit dwells within, so the body of Christ is alive and active only when the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, dwells therein. Writing to the church at Corinth Paul said, "Ye are the body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:27). Writing to this same church he said, "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16). While this is written to the church, it should be noticed that certain key words are plural. "Know ye" is plural; "ye are" is plural; the word "you" is plural. Here Paul affirms that the Spirit of God "dwells in you." The Spirit does not dwell in the church in some abstract, group, sense. The Spirit dwells in the members that make up the church, the body of Christ. Just as the human spirit is in every member of the hu-

man body, so the Holy Spirit dwells in every member of the spiritual body, the church. Every member of the human body partakes of the human spirit and every member of the body of Christ partakes of the Spirit of Christ, which both Paul and Peter teach is the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Pet. 1:10). The human spirit gives life to every member of the human body as long as the members are connected to the human body; so the Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to every member of the body of Christ as long as that member is connected to that body. When a member of the human body is severed from the body, it decays; so when a member of Christ's spiritual body, the church, is severed from that body by sin, it dies spiritually. Unless and until one becomes a member of the spiritual body of Christ, the church, that one is dead spiritually. There is no such thing as physical life outside of the physical body; so there is no such thing as spiritual life outside of the spiritual body, the church of Christ. And may I repeat that Paul says we are baptized into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Therefore, the unbaptized person who is responsible to God is outside the body and devoid of the life given by the indwelling Spirit.

Paul prays that "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14). This also is addressed to the church at Corinth. And again we notice that the words "you all" are plural. So Paul wished that each member of the body of Christ in Corinth would enjoy the "communion of the Holy Spirit." The Greek word for communion is elsewhere translated fellowship (Phil 2:1). Hence Paul teaches that those in the body of Christ enjoy the fellowship, communion, of the Holy Spirit. Surely all will agree that when Paul prayed for the grace of Christ to be with

all in the body of Christ at Corinth he meant he wanted all to enjoy the grace which flows from Christ; when he prayed for the love of God to be with them all he wanted them to enjoy the love which God has for all; so when he prayed for the communion of the Holy Spirit to be with all he meant that he wanted all of them to enjoy their fellowship with the Holy Spirit. But remember that none can enjoy the fellowship of the Holy Spirit unless and until that one is in the body of Christ where the Spirit dwells. And since we are baptized into that body, it follows that the unbaptized are in no position to enjoy the communion of the Holy Spirit.

This is in perfect agreement with the teaching of Jesus Christ when he told his apostles to baptize people "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). By this statement he meant that one is brought by baptism into fellowship and communion with the person into whose name one is baptized. When one is baptized into the name of the Father, that one enters into fellowship with the Father; and when one is baptized into the name of the Holy Spirit, that one enters into fellowship and communion with the Holy Spirit. It follows, therefore, that the unbaptized has no fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

Another blessing to be enjoyed in the body of Christ is fellowship with the people of God. Referring again to Paul's analogy between the physical body and the spiritual body of Christ, we learn that as there is a close relationship between the various members of the physical body, so there is a close relationship between the members that make up the body of Christ. "And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member

is honored, all the members rejoice with it" (1 Cor. 12:26). This spiritual fellowship is limited to members of the same body. First, my hand can have fellowship with other members of my body only so long as that hand retains its connection with the body. If it is severed from the body its fellowship with other members of my body ceases. So a member of the body of Christ can enjoy spiritual fellowship with other members of that body only so long as he maintains his connection with the spiritual body. Next, one who has never established a connection with the spiritual body of Christ can have no spiritual fellowship with members of that body. Paul teaches that there is no communion between light and darkness; no concord between Christ and Belial; no portion between the believer and the unbeliever (2 Cor. 6:15, 16). The unbeliever has no portion in, does not share with the believer in, the spiritual joys and blessings found in the body of Christ. If Christ and Satan can have no fellowship with each other, why should we think the servants of Christ and the servants of Satan can have fellowship with each other in spiritual matters? For this reason, if for no other, members of the body of Christ should not marry members of the body of Satan. Though they may have many things in common and enjoy their physical union, they can have no spiritual fellowship because they belong to two antagonistic bodies, two bodies that can never be reconciled.

And for this reason there can be no spiritual fellowship between God's people, members of the body of Christ, and religious people who have never been baptized into the body of Christ. This is why members of the body of Christ cannot enter into union efforts at preaching the gospel of Christ and enjoying periods of worship with those who have never been baptized into the body of Christ. If we can

have communion with them for one day, we can do so for one year, and for one lifetime, and so we lose all reason for a separate existence as a religious body. Much of this talk about dialogue and cooperation with our religious neighbors results in compromise and a diseased body of Christ. If Jesus and Satan cannot sit down as equals and dialogue out of their differences, how can you expect the servants of Christ and the servants of Satan to do so? If Jesus and Satan are to war with each other and there can be no compromise, we should realize that the servants of Jesus and the servants of Satan are in a spiritual war and there can be no compromise. We conquer or die.

Let us draw one more lesson from Paul's analogy between the physical body and the spiritual body of Christ. The human blood flows to each member of the human body, cleansing and purifying each member. So the blood of Christ may be said to be in the body of Christ to cleanse, purify, and sanctify each member of that spiritual body. Each member of the body of Christ is a blood-washed member. "For if the blood of bulls and goats . . . sanctified unto the cleanness of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:13, 14). And John says Jesus "loosed us from our sins by his blood" (Rev. 1:5). And the blood of Jesus continues to cleanse us from all our sins (1 John 1:7). But if this blood is in his body which is the church, it follows that those who have never been baptized into that one body (1 Cor. 12:13) have never been cleansed from their sins. And unless and until they are baptized into that one body, their sins will never be forgiven. What an awful thing it will be to stand before the judgment bar of God unforgiven; stained

and polluted with all the sins of a lifetime; as defiled in soul as the leper is defiled in body! Jesus gave himself up for the church which is his body that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:25-27). Will you be a part of that cleansed and glorious church which the Lord will present to himself? If you have never been baptized into that one body, you cannot entertain the hope of having a part in that glorious presentation. We read again that Jesus gave himself up for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession (Titus 2:14). Are you a part of that redeemed possession for whom the Lord will come with all his angels? In this verse we learn that Jesus gave himself for "us," but in Eph. 5:25, we learn that he gave himself up for the church. So the "us" of Titus 2 is the church of Eph. 5. Therefore, the church is that body which he redeems from all iniquity; that body which is his own possession. Are you a member of that body? If you have never been baptized into that body you have no right to claim to be a member of it. After considering with me the blessings to be enjoyed in that body, do you not want to be a member of it? You can become a member of that body over which Jesus is Head and enjoy all the blessings God has provided therein if you are willing to accept Jesus as your Saviour and Head this night. Will you bow in humble submission to him as Head, obey his commandment to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of all your sins that you may receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and entertain the hope of eternal life with your Lord and all the redeemed saints of all ages? Come now as we sing for your encouragement.

## THE AUTHORITY OF THE WORD

B. J. HUMBLE

B. J. Humble is the new academic dean of Abilene Christian College. A graduate of ACC, he also attended Freed-Hardeman College, the University of Colorado (M.A.), Southern Baptist Seminary, and the University of Iowa (Ph.D.). Dr. Humble had been teaching Bible and church history at ACC for five years before succeeding Walter H. Adams as dean of the college on September 1, 1969.

After teaching at Florida Christian College for four years (1949-1953), Dr. Humble spent several years in church work in Kansas City, Louisville, and Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Also, he preached for the Woodlawn church in Abilene for five years while teaching at ACC.

Dr. Humble spent the entire summer of 1968 in a 35,000 mile trip around the world, visiting with our missionaries and lecturing at



Bible colleges in seventeen countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe. In 1969 he was conductor of the annual Abilene Christian College Bible Lands Tour, which visited eight countries in the Near East and Europe.

His family consists of his wife, Jerry, who is a teacher in the Abilene public schools, and two children, Eric and Becky.

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Less than two years ago in the spring of 1968, there were serious student riots in Paris which threatened to overthrow the

French government. Students seized the Sorbonne. Shortly after the seizure, a student paused before a large "No Smoking" sign near the entrance of an auditorium. He crossed out the words "No Smoking" and in their place crudely lettered the words, "You have the right to smoke." But before long another student came by and added his own message, "It is forbidden to forbid." This slogan caught on and became the watchcry of the student revolution. It appeared in many places and became known as "the law of the 13th of May" — "It is forbidden to forbid."

The spirit of anarchy embodied in this slogan would destroy society, but unfortunately, this spirit seems to be increasing in our modern world. Whatever has been handed down from the past is suspect to many. Our democratic way of life, the moral standards that have built western civilization, and the historic Christian faith are all being questioned. It seems appropriate, then, that one of our lectures should deal with "The Authority of the Word."

### *The Authority of the Living Word*

The chances are that as I announce this subject, many of you think instinctively of the Scripture as the Word of God and assume that this lecture will deal with the authority of the Scripture. Later I will discuss the authority of the Bible, but I want to begin with the one whose authority lies back of the Scripture—the Living Word. The gospel of John begins with the familiar passage:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him;



and without him was not anything made that hath been made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.... And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-14).

The term Logos, which John used to describe Jesus, had a long history in Greek and Jewish thought. The Logos was the rational principle or impersonal energy which lay back of the universe, the creative principle of God, or in Philo of Alexandria, the thought and speech of God. But John used Logos in a personal sense to describe Jesus as the Word, one of the persons of the Godhead, incarnate in human form. Look at what John affirms of the Word. (1) He existed from eternity. "In the beginning was the Word." (2) "The Word was with God." He stands as a person distinct from the Father, yet in eternal fellowship with his Father. (3) "The Word was God." Christ is deity, a distinct person from the Father, but equally God. (4) The Word is the creator of the material world. "All things were made through him." (5) The Word is the source of our spiritual life. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (6) "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." The man Jesus was the incarnation of the deity; God, without ceasing to be God, had become man to unite men with himself.

Thus as the apostles walked and talked with Jesus, they saw beyond his manhood to his Godhood. Here is the way John expressed it: "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life... that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fel-

lowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:1-3). Not only did John see Jesus as the Word of God, but he also knew that when Jesus taught, he spoke with the authority of God. John was one of the "inner circle" who accompanied Jesus to the Mount of Transfiguration. Jesus had taken Peter, James, and John into a high mountain apart (perhaps snow-capped Mt. Hermon in northern Palestine) and was transfigured before them. After Moses and Elijah appeared, a bright cloud overshadowed them and the voice of God spoke, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matt. 17:1-5). Many years later Peter recalled the Transfiguration and declared:

We did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God, the Father, honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount (2 Peter 1:16-18).

Peter and John had no doubts about the authority of Christ to make absolute demands on their lives, for they had heard God say, "Hear ye him."

The Christian who lives in the twentieth century believes in the authority of the Living Word just as Peter and John did. But the Christian today cannot hear the words of Jesus in the same way that his first disciples did. Those first disciples were contemporaries in time. They spent three years with Jesus, they walked through Galilee and shared his hunger, they saw his miracles and heard his demands

on their lives. But there is no way that we can do this. We can visit the same places, but there is a difference—Jesus is not there. Last summer several of us visited Galilee. One night, as the moon began to rise over the Sea of Galilee, we sat down on the shore for worship together. Each person in that circle recalled one of the events from Jesus' ministry that had happened around the Sea of Galilee. We thought about his calling the four fishermen, the parables that he taught from a boat, his calming the storm, and his walking on the water. We all knew that we were there at the Sea of Galilee where these events happened, but even though it was a moving experience, Jesus was not there. We could not see him as the apostles did.

We saw Thee not when Thou didst come To this poor  
world of sin and death;  
We saw Thee not when lifted high, Amid that wild and  
savage crew;  
Nor heard we that imploring cry, "Forgive, they know not  
what they do!"  
We gazed not in the open tomb, where once Thy mangled  
body lay;  
Nor saw Thee in that "upper Room," Nor met Thee on  
the open way;  
But we believe the deed was done, That shook the earth  
and veiled the sun;  
But we believe that human eyes Beheld that journey to  
the skies.

The apostles were contemporaries of Christ *in time*, and they knew Jesus in the flesh as one man knows another and heard his words with their ears. But today, we are separated from Christ by nineteen hundred years. We are contemporaries of Christ, not in time, but *in faith*. And this means that we can know the *Living Word* only through the *written Word*.

*The Authority of the Written Word*

Just as I used a familiar passage, John 1, to emphasize the authority of the Living Word, so I want to use another familiar passage, 2 Tim. 3:16, 17, to stress the authority of the written Word. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." There are three affirmations about the Scripture in these verses.

(1) *The Scripture is inspired of God.* Our English words "inspired of God" translate a Greek word *theopneustos* which means "God-breathed." This means that the Scripture is an expression of the mind or Spirit of God. As my thoughts are communicated by my words, so the thoughts of God are communicated through the words of these God-breathed writings. The word *theopneustos* is found only once in the New Testament (2 Tim. 3:16), but the idea of inspiration is found repeatedly in both testaments. The book of Hebrews begins with a declaration that God once spoke to the fathers through the prophets but now has spoken to us through his Son. Peter says of the Old Testament, "No prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). Jesus promised the apostles:

When they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you (Matt. 10:19, 20).

This is what inspiration means — that the Spirit of God was

speaking through the Biblical writers.

The terms revelations and inspiration need to be distinguished from one another. Revelation is God's self-disclosure or unveiling of Himself. It refers to those acts of God by which he has communicated to men a knowledge of himself and his will. God disclosed himself at the Red Sea, at Mt. Sinai, and in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ—this is revelation. Inspiration refers to that guidance which the Holy Spirit exerted on the minds of selected men to enable them to give the world an infallible knowledge of God's revelation. I confess that I do not understand the mystery of inspiration. But neither do I understand the mystery of the Incarnation, how a man, Jesus of Nazareth, could be fully man and yet be the infinite God at the same time. I cannot understand it, but I believe it. Just so, I do not understand how God could use the minds of men, their vocabularies and personalities and modes of expression, and yet through them give the world a trustworthy knowledge of the mind of God. I do not understand how the Holy Spirit guided these selected men, but I believe that he did it.

(2) *The Scripture is authoritative.* The inspired Word is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." When Jesus was carrying on his ministry, he taught his hearers to respect the authority of the Old Testament. But he also taught them that his authority transcended that of the Old Testament. The words of the Sermon on the Mount illustrate this, "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, . . . but I say unto you." Christ told the apostles:

All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (Matt. 28:18-20).

Moreover, the apostles were promised the special guidance of the Holy Spirit in this work. "Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13). Filled with the Holy Spirit of God, these men spoke with the authority of Christ, and their written Word speaks to our lives with ultimate authority.

When we affirm the authority of the written Word, we are not in any sense minimizing the authority of the Living Word. The good news of Christ now reaches us through the New Testament, and without the written Word there would be no access to the Living Word. Let us suppose that the events described in the New Testament had all happened, that God revealed himself in Christ, that Christ did die on Calvary, and that he actually was raised from the dead. But what if no record of these happenings had been preserved? Or a record had been left so filled with mistakes that we could not separate the fact from fiction? The man who has never heard of Christ cannot know his saving power, and the only knowledge we have comes through the written Word.

(3) *The Scripture is all-sufficient.* "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable... that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." Three hundred years ago, William Chillingworth coined the famous statement, "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the

religion of Protestants." This is still our faith—that the Bible discloses everything that God expects of us and provides every principle that governs our lives.

The most basic difference between us and the Catholic Church is the sufficiency of the Scripture. The Catholic position is that the living voice of the infallible church, rather than the Scripture, is the ultimate authority. When I was in Graduate School at the University of Iowa, I had a number of courses in theology under Catholic professors. It was an interesting experience, and it helped me to see that their starting point is different from ours. When a student would ask a question, the Catholic professor would often begin his response, "The church teaches. . . ." This is the basic question—what is your ultimate authority? The church or the Word?

For the past several decades Gustave Weigel, a Jesuit, has been one of the leading Catholic theologians in the United States. Commenting on the question of ultimate authority, Weigel has written:

The Catholic does not say in the first instance, "What does the Bible say?" Rather he asks, "What does the teaching Church say?" The Church and the Book say the same things, and since the Book is in a peculiar sense God's Word, he will turn to the Book. However, this is not his ultimate recourse. He has only one ultimate recourse, the Church herself, and the Book is accepted from her hand and with her explanation. . . . Over the Book stands the Church, while according to the Reform conception, over the Church stands the Book.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gustave Weigel, "The Significance of Papal Pronouncements," in *The Papal Encyclicals*, Anne Freemantle (ed.), p. 11.

This is the basic issue between us and Catholicism. Does the Bible stand in judgement over the church? Or does the church stand in judgement over the Bible? Nearly a century ago, James Cardinal Gibbons wrote:

We must, therefore, conclude that the Scriptures *alone* cannot be a sufficient guide and rule of faith because they cannot, at any time, be within the reach of every inquirer; because they are not of themselves clear and intelligible even in matters of highest importance, and because they do not contain all the truths necessary to salvation.<sup>2</sup>

This statement is diametrically opposed to what Paul affirms about the Scripture. Paul stated that the Scripture furnishes the man of God completely unto every good work; and by contrast Cardinal Gibbons stated that the Scripture does not contain all the truths necessary to salvation.

### *A College Under The Word*

The principles which I have been emphasizing—the inspiration, authority, and all-sufficiency of the Bible—constitute the foundation upon which the restoration movement was begun in America a century and a half ago. The idea of restoring New Testament Christianity presupposes a conviction that the Bible is the Word of God and that it is the standard by which the church must be measured in every age. And this faith in the Bible is also the foundation upon which the colleges of the restoration movement have been founded. We are fortunate to be the heirs of a reli-

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<sup>2</sup> James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of our Fathers*, pp. 89, 90.



gious heritage that has emphasized quality education founded on the Word of God. The early leaders of the restoration movement were all well educated men. Thomas Campbell was a graduate of the University of Glasgow, studied in the Seceder Theological Seminary in Scotland, and was a teacher all his life. Alexander Campbell also studied at Glasgow and was the founder of Bethany College in 1840. Barton Stone was educated at David Caldwell's Academy and spent many years teaching. Walter Scott was a graduate of the University of Edinburgh and served as the first president of Bacon College, our first Christian college.

Alexander Campbell believed that the quest for simple New Testament Christianity required educated men and women and he said, "Of all people in the world we ought then to be . . . the greatest patrons of schools and colleges." Campbell founded Bethany College in 1840 and he considered the Bible the most important textbook. He stated, "Bethany College is the only college known to us in the civilized world, founded upon the Bible." However, he emphasized that the school was not a theological seminary but "a literary and scientific institution, founded upon the Bible as the basis of all true science and true learning."<sup>3</sup>

Abilene Christian College stands in this same tradition—a liberal arts college with the Bible at the heart of its curriculum. When Abilene Christian College opened for its first session in 1906, A. B. Barret, the first president, said, "My basic idea about the school was to teach the

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<sup>3</sup> *Millennial Harbinger*, 1850, p. 291.

Bible and build character." The words on the cornerstone of the Administration building are still there in stone and in our hearts, "We believe in the divinity of Christ and the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures." The Abilene Christian College faculty is now engaged in a self-study which is required every ten years by the Southern Association. One committee studied and rewrote the college's statement of purpose. The new statement of purpose, accepted by the entire faculty, reaffirms our commitment to the basic ideals for which Abilene Christian College was founded. The new statement says, "Abilene Christian College emphasizes a curriculum of liberal studies, exalts the Bible as the Word of God, and strives for Christian values in contemporary life."

Abilene Christian College might be described as a college under the Word of God. We believe that all of our students should study the Bible, know the Living Word who confronts us in the Bible, and build their lives upon the principles which he taught. The whole college community always stands under the judgement of the Word. The aim of this college is to train young people for Christian service throughout the world. Every teacher in every department shares the responsibility for doing this, and if we fail, we all stand under the judgement of the Word. As Jesus said, "The words that I have spoken, the same shall judge you in the last day."

There are two complementary goals which must always be kept in view in Christian education. One goal is academic excellence. We must give our students a quality education—the very best education that is possible with the facilities and resources at our command. The second goal

is our spiritual commitment. And this goal is our reason for existence. This is why our brotherhood gave birth to Abilene Christian College sixty-three years ago and this is why they continue to support our work. But the real question is whether we can reach both goals — academic excellence and spiritual commitment — without sacrificing one or the other. Can we become a better college academically, perhaps even an outstanding college, and still be a Christian college where first things come first? I believe that we *can* reach both these goals, but it will not be easy.

The tendency in American education has been for church-related colleges to drift away from their religious moorings and to become more and more secular in outlook. A few years ago the Danforth Foundation made a study of 817 church-related colleges in America and concluded that church-related colleges are failing to achieve their religious purposes. The Danforth report stated:

It is our considered opinion that religion is not as strong in the programs of church-related institutions as one would expect. In fact, there is good reason to believe that these institutions are, by and large, stronger academically... than they are religiously.<sup>4</sup>

And if this report is not warning enough, we can ponder what has happened to many of the earlier colleges established in the restoration movement. The early leaders of the restoration movement established many colleges, and some of these have survived to become great schools academically; but we would not want Abilene Christian Col-

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<sup>4</sup> Manning M. Pattillo, Jr., and Donald M. Mackenzie, *Eight Hundred Colleges Face the Future* (St. Louis: The Danforth Foundation, 1965), p. 41.

lege to become what they are—Texas Christian University, Drake, Butler, and Bethany.

What our brotherhood expects Abilene Christian College to be is a “defender of the faith” or “affirming” college; that is, a school that remains committed to the Word of God. The very existence of our school depends upon its rapport with our brotherhood—a brotherhood that believes in the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible and the restoration of New Testament Christianity. Our brotherhood expects—and has a right to expect—that Abilene Christian College will remain committed to these principles. We dare not forget the spiritual purposes for which this school was founded. If the time ever comes when ACC is alienated from the confidence of our brotherhood, the college cannot survive. Whether a Christian college can become an outstanding *college* and still be a *Christian* college where spiritual values come first, whether it can become strong academically and still remain loyal to the principle of restoring New Testament Christianity, this great question is yet to be answered. So far as I know, it has never been done. But this is our task. And I believe that we can do it!

#### *A Call for Commitment to the Word*

Today there is a great need for an inner renewal of our commitment to the authority of the Word of God. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the Word of God shall not pass away. And as Jesus said, “The Scripture cannot be broken.” We may ignore its demands, and in the end we may be judged and broken by the Word, but the Word of God cannot be broken. The faculty and student body of Abilene Christian College need to renew their pledge to live

under the sovereignty of the Word. The whole brotherhood that is represented here tonight needs to reaffirm its total commitment to the Word. And perhaps we can become a leaven to lead the American nation back to faith in the Bible. "One nation under God," we say in our pledge of allegiance to the flag, but "a nation without God" we are rapidly becoming. As General Omar Bradley has said, "We have too many men of science, too few men of God; too much knowledge of the atomic bomb, too little knowledge of the sermon on the mount."

As I call for renewed commitment to the Word, I want to illustrate what total commitment to a cause really means. There are many Biblical examples of total dedication — Paul, Peter, and above all, our Lord — and these are familiar to all. The example that I want to use, the defense of Masada, may not be so familiar.

Masada is a mountain on the western shore of the Dead Sea. It is a towering mass of rock, standing alone, shaped like a great ship. Its precipitous walls rise 1350 feet above the Dead Sea, and the flat surface of the rock has an area of twenty-three acres. About 35 B.C. Herod the Great built a spectacular fortress atop Masada. Herod feared the possibility of a Jewish revolt against his rule, and perhaps even more, he feared that Cleopatra and Mark Anthony might conspire to take his kingdom away from him. And so, Herod ordered the building of palaces and fortress that could withstand any attack. It was a remarkable feat of ancient engineering. A casemate wall encircled the summit of Masada. There were two palaces within the walls, one a three-tiered palace that clung to the pointed north end of the rock. There were also great storage chambers to withstand a long seige, Roman baths, a swimming pool, and

quarters for the soldiers. There was also a synagogue, the first that archaeologists have ever found dating back to the first century.

After the death of Herod the Great in 4 B.C., Masada was occupied by Roman legions. Then in 66 A.D. the Jewish hatred of the Romans flamed into open rebellion. The Roman armies, 60,000 strong, crushed the Jews. They laid siege to Jerusalem, destroyed the city and its temple, and sold the survivors into slavery. But there was one little band of Jews, 960 strong including the men and their wives and children, who held out against the Romans after the fall of Jerusalem. Led by Eleazer ben Ya'ir, they fled into the Judean wilderness and seized Masada. One year, two years, for an incredible three years, these Zealots held out against the might of Rome.

In the spring of 73 A.D. Flavius Silva, the procurator of Judaea, set out with 5,000 troops to eliminate this last nest of Zealot resistance. The Romans built a wall around the base of Masada to seal the Zealots inside, but still they held out. Finally, there was no alternative but a frontal assault on the heights of Masada. The Romans used slave labor, thousands of Jews who had been taken prisoner in the fall of Jerusalem, to build a great ramp up to the summit. The ramp is still there, and when my wife and I visited Masada a few months ago, we walked up the ramp to the summit. The Zealots tried to hinder the work, and great stones were rolled down but to no avail. When the ramp was complete, the Romans brought a siege tower and great battering ram and punched a hole through the wall.

The last hours of Masada had come. The Roman troops

withdrew for the night. The final assault would come the next morning, and it would not be difficult for 5,000 Roman soldiers to push through the breach in the wall and overrun the fortress. The defenders knew their position was hopeless. What Eleazer ben Ya'ir feared was not death, but what would follow the men's death—the rape of their wives and slavery for their children. Eleazer called his men together and called for an act of courage that may be without parallel in history. Eleazer told his men:

Long ago we resolved to serve neither the Romans nor anyone else but only God, who alone is the true and righteous Lord of men: now the time has come that bids us prove our determination by our deeds . . . We were the first of all to revolt, and shall be the last to break off the struggle. And I think it is God who has given us this privilege, that we can die nobly and as free men, unlike others who were unexpectedly defeated. In our case it is evident that daybreak will end our resistance, but we are free to choose an honourable death with our loved ones. This our enemies cannot prevent, however earnestly they may pray to take us alive; nor can we defeat them in battle.

Let our wives die unabused, our children without knowledge of slavery; after that, let us do each other an ungrudging kindness, preserving our freedom as a glorious winding-sheet. But first let our possessions and the whole fortress go up in flames: it will be a bitter blow to the Romans, that I know, to find our persons beyond their reach and nothing left for them to loot. Only one thing let us spare—our store of food: it will bear witness when we are dead to the fact that we perished, not through want but because, as we resolved at the beginning, we choose death rather than slavery . . .

Come! while our hands are free and can hold a sword, let them do us a noble service! Let us die unenslaved by

our enemies, and leave this world as freemen in company with our wives and children.<sup>5</sup>

The Zealots agreed and vowed mass suicide rather than slavery. Each man called his wife and children, bid them a long and tearful farewell, and killed them with his own sword. Next, the men chose ten men by lot to kill all the others. Each man flung himself over the bodies of his wife and children and bared his neck so that a companion in arms could be his executioner. The last ten then drew lots among themselves. One last man was chosen to kill the other nine and then drive his sword into his own body.

As fires burned through the night, the Romans must have wondered what was happening on Masada. But when they stormed into Masada with the coming of dawn, they found the answer. Instead of the bitter fighting they had expected, they were greeted with smoldering ashes and dead bodies, families lying together. According to Josephus, the Romans could take no pleasure in what had happened, even though it was done to their enemies. "Nor could they do other than wonder at the courage of their resolution, and at the immovable contempt of death which so great a number of them had shown."

The story of Masada is one of the greatest epics in Jewish history. "The courage of their resolution," to use Josephus' words, is an example for all ages and all people of what men and women will do when they are truly

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<sup>5</sup> Quoted from Flavius Josephus in "Masada" (Tel Aviv: National Parks Authority). The excellent account of the Masada excavation is Yigael Yadin, *Masada* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966).



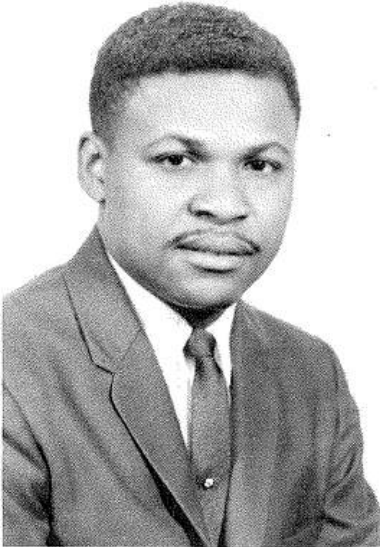
dedicated to a cause. And we are called upon for dedication, total and absolute dedication, to the cause of Christ. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." God confronts us in the Living Word, who is revealed in the written Word, and who stands before each of us demanding that our lives confess, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." The Zealots of Masada had the courage to give themselves and their loved ones *in death* to a dead cause. But we are called upon to give ourselves *in life* to a Living Word.

## YE SHALL BE MY WITNESSES

JACK EVANS

Jack Evans is a native of Houston, Texas. He was baptized into the Church of Christ in 1953 at the age of 15 by the late Paul Settles. He began preaching at the age of 16. After attending the public schools of Houston for 9 years, he transferred to the Nashville Christian Institute in Nashville, Tennessee, of which the eminent Marshall Keeble was President at the time. He graduated from this high school in 1957. He then enrolled in Southwestern Christian College, a junior college, of Terrell, Texas, from which he graduated in 1959. He served as the Associate Minister of the college Church of Christ while attending Southwestern.

After graduating from Southwestern Christian College, Jack Evans enrolled in Eastern New Mexico University in Portales, New Mexico, majoring in History and Religion. He graduated from this university



in 1961. He preached for a small congregation in Hale Center, Texas, while in college in New Mexico. Upon graduating from this university he began graduate work in History and English at the University of Texas at El Paso (Texas Western College at the time) in 1961, receiving his M.A. Degree in 1963. His M.A. thesis was entitled "The History of Southwestern Christian College of Terrell, Texas." He was Minister of the Cebada Street Church of Christ in El Paso while attending the university.

After serving for a short while as Minister of the Vickery Boulevard Church of Christ in Ft. Worth, Texas, he

became Dean of his junior college Alma Mater, Southwestern Christian College, in 1963. He served in this capacity and as instructor in history for four years, 1963-67. In 1967 he was appointed President of this college, thus becoming the first black President of the only predominantly black Christian college among Churches of Christ. He is presently serving in this capacity.

Jack Evans is married to the former Patricia Officer of Nashville, Tennessee. They have two sons, Jack, Jr. and Herbert Raye.

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The last statement made to His disciples by the Saviour before mounting the clouds back to heaven was the one that is being used as the subject of this address. Jesus, being assembled with those whom He had chosen, said in reply to the last question asked by His lowly followers regarding the restoration of the Kingdom, "...But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The primary purpose for the coming of Jesus to the earth was to reconcile humanity and divinity. His perfect life and works on earth and His ignoble death on the cross were all a part of God's divine scheme of redemption for humanity. This scheme was minutely planned and carefully veiled as a mystery, wrapped in the mind of God since the foundation of the world. The great apostle Paul said, "Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scripture of the prophets according to the commandment of the

everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith..." (Rom. 16:25-26). Paul tells us again in his epistle to the Ephesians that this "mystery" of God, which was not made known to men in other ages, has now been made known to God's holy apostles and prophets by the spirit and that it is the responsibility of God's church today, comprised of Jews and Gentiles, who are fellow heirs, to make known the "manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:1-10).

### *Preparation of His Witnesses*

In commissioning the church as His witnessing community, Jesus first unraveled the testimony to the initial members of the church in order to enable them to pass it on to others. Those men who walked with the Master, who saw Him walk the sea of Galilee and raise Lazarus from the dead; those men who heard His prophetic utterances regarding His establishment of a Kingdom which would include "other sheep," and the facts of His death, burial, and resurrection, did not fully understand what their testimony would be until after His resurrection. Jesus had told them previous to His death that He would send a Comforter to them, even the spirit of truth, who would come from the Father. And he, the spirit, would testify of Christ. Jesus followed that pronouncement by saying "... And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:27).

In preparing these witnesses for their testimony, it was necessary for Jesus to give to them a perfect understanding of this "manifold wisdom of God." After His glorious resurrection, the Master appeared to His disciples and, as re-

corded by Luke, "then *opened He their understanding*, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name *among all nations*, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24:45-48). These men were now armed with a clear understanding of the testimony, but they were not yet ready to go into "all the world." They yet lacked the power of the spirit in their lives. Jesus told them in our text that they would receive power after the Holy Ghost had come upon them. The testimony to all nations and every creature was to begin after the reception of this power.

Inasmuch as God prepared the first-century witnesses with a clear understanding of their testimony and a power-filled life to give impetus and credibility to their testimony, He does no less for 20th-century witnesses today. We, brethren, must witness for Christ today collectively and individually, not only in words, but also in deeds. Our testimony can only be effective when it is supported by a power-packed, spirit-filled life.

### *Scope of Our Witness*

Unlike the generality of the "great commission" as recorded in Mark 16:15-16, in our text, Acts 1:8, Jesus was very specific in identifying for the first witnesses the areas of the world in which their testimony was to be born. Before His death, burial and resurrection, He had restricted the work of His disciples to the confines of the Jewish nation. After His fulfillment of prophecy and conquering of

death, He said to His disciples that they were to bear witness unto Him both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. I believe, ladies and gentlemen, that in specifying these areas in this order, the Saviour had a deeply significant meaning and an all-wise purpose in mind. The statement had a significant meaning to those Jewish disciples whom He was preparing to bear testimony; and it has a deeply spiritual meaning to His household of faith today.

### *Jerusalem and Judea*

Jesus began this widening circle of evangelism by commanding His witnesses to begin their testimony in Jerusalem. Why Jerusalem? Jerusalem was the chief city of the Jewish nation. Jerusalem was the center of the religious world. Jerusalem was Mount Zion. Throughout its illustrious history, Jerusalem was recognized as the holy city of God. But with all these tags of religiosity, Jerusalem was spiritually corrupt and in danger of losing her soul. It was because of this great paradox that Jesus, on one occasion, wept over this great city. And knowing Jerusalem as He did, the Master told the first witnesses to start testifying of Him in Jerusalem — at home. He realized that their witnessing would have been more effective by beginning in the place in which it was needed most.

Today, the church, God's witnessing community, must begin her testimony for Christ within her own confines. This is done by following the example set by the Master-teacher, Himself. The Bible says that Jesus *did* before He *taught*. The church must bear witness to Jesus by emulating Him to the best of its ability, and by witnessing a good

confession even if it is unto death. The witness of the church becomes ineffective today when the hearers of the message detect an inconsistency between the bearer of the message and the message itself. For the effectiveness of the message is greatly dependent upon the life and action of the messenger. This is why Paul tells us today to, "fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses . . . Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Tim. 6:12, 14). Leaving Jerusalem, the witnesses were to take their testimony to all Judea. Persecution in Jerusalem caused many of the Christians to flee into regions of Judea. And as they scattered into these regions, they "preached the word" (Acts 8:1, 4).

### *Samaria*

Our Lord specifically commanded His followers to witness for Him in Samaria. Why is this specific reference made to Samaria? The history of Samaria is bound up with the troublesome internal affairs of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, eventually becoming its capitol. This city was besieged by the Assyrians in 721 B.C. Some of its Jewish inhabitants were deported and replaced by heathen people drawn from other nations. The Jews who remained in Samaria intermarried with the invading foreigners, thus creating a mongrel, semi-alien race of people called Samaritans. An intense hatred then developed between the "pure" Jew and the Samaritans. After the Babylonian captivity, the Jews refused to let the Samaritans assist them in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. The hatred was so intense that these

two races could not worship together. The Jews recognized Jerusalem and Mount Zion as the chosen place for worship. The Samaritans recognized Mount Gerizim, which had been an Israelite holy place before Jerusalem, as the chosen place and constructed their temple there. This racial hatred led to the destruction of the Samaritan's temple by the Jews under John Hyrcanus at the end of the second century B.C. Another characteristic of this hatred is seen in the fact that Jews, in their travelling between Judea in the south and Galilee in the north, would travel through Perea. They took this route to avoid passing through the land of the Samaritans, which they despised. And those few Jews who did pass through Samaria were unwelcomed by the Samaritans (Luke 9:53). The most offensive term the Jews could apply to anyone was to call him a "Samaritan" (John 8:48).

It was this religio-racial hatred that was smoldering in Palestine when our Lord entered upon the scene. He did not immediately order His followers into Samaria. On the contrary, He told them initially to "...Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the city of the Samaritans enter ye not..." (Matt. 10:5). This command, however, does not suggest that Jesus, being a Jew, conformed to the racial animosities and idiosyncrasies of His people. It is only that He realized that those Jewish preachers were not ready within themselves to deal with this explosive situation, and that the Samaritans, because of past relationships, were not ready to receive them.

When He was ready to prepare the Jews and the Samaritans for the reception of the Christian testimony—the oneness of all men—Jesus, contrary to the traditions of



His race, took His disciples into Samaria. And while His disciples were in the city purchasing meat, He encountered a Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob. After talking with Him about the racial issue and her personal affairs, the woman asked Jesus the burning religious question of the day: where were men to worship, in Jerusalem or in Mount Gerizim? Jesus answered this woman by telling her that the hour was coming in which the worship of God would not be restricted to Mount Gerizim or to Jerusalem. But that the true worshipper, regardless of his ethnic origin, would worship God in spirit and in truth. He pointed out that the emphasis would not be placed on the "where" of worship, but on the "how." The woman then went into the city testifying that she had met the Christ, the Saviour of the world (John 4:20-30).

Jesus, I believe, had this situation and all situations like it in mind when he specifically commanded His witnesses to "Go into Samaria." There are "Samarias" today that we as witnesses for Christ must enter. This will only be done when we are filled with the power that comes from God. This power will cause the Church to go into the "Samaria" of race relations, an area which we have long been avoiding. It will cause us to witness for Christ in the area of human dignity. This power will compel us to witness for Christ not only in large, multimillion dollar church buildings, but also in the "Samarias" of the downtrodden ghettos of the world. This power will cause us to take our testimony into the "Samaria" of the dope addicts, alcoholics, and prostitutes. This power will literally pull us with our testimony into the many "Samarias" which we have been despising and avoiding for years. Bear witness, my brother, in Samaria.

*Unto the Uttermost Part of the Earth*

All peoples of the earth, at the time Jesus made the statement of our text, were considered divisible into three classes: (1) The Jews, who adhered to the law of Moses and prophetic writings, worshipping the true God only, in keeping up the temple service, as prescribed in the law. (2) The Samaritans, a mongrel people who worshipped the God of Israel in connection with other gods, and who had no religious connection with the Jews. (3) The Gentiles, the heathens who were addicted to idolatry alone, and had no knowledge of the true God. It was this latter group to which Jesus referred as the "uttermost part of the earth." In other words, it is to the whole human race that the testimony for Christ is to be made.

It is the mission of God's Church to witness for Christ in every age and to every creature. Paul says that the church is the "pillar and ground of the truth." This means that God's witnesses are the soul supporters of these things which we most surely believe. Once we receive the testimony, our salvation becomes dependent upon what we do with it. To conceal it selfishly is to jeopardize our salvation and the salvation of the world.

*The Christian's Testimony*

Witnesses for Christ must bear the testimony of His perfect life, His inglorious death and burial, and His triumphant resurrection. We must not only tell others what He can do for them, we must also show them in our lives what He has done for us. We must join our fellow-witness,

Paul, in saying "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..." (Gal. 2-20).

Christians must also bear witness to the doctrine of Christ. The Bible says that when the Samaritans "...believed Phillip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:12). Obedience to the doctrine of Christ, then, is a part of the Christian's testimony.

The promise of an eternal inheritance is the most joyful part of the Christian's testimony. Paul said that there is a crown awaiting all those who love the appearing of the Saviour. John, who bore record of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, said that when God's witnesses shall have finished their testimony, God shall raise them and say to them "come up hither." They shall ascend up to heaven in a cloud (Rev. 11:7, 11-12).

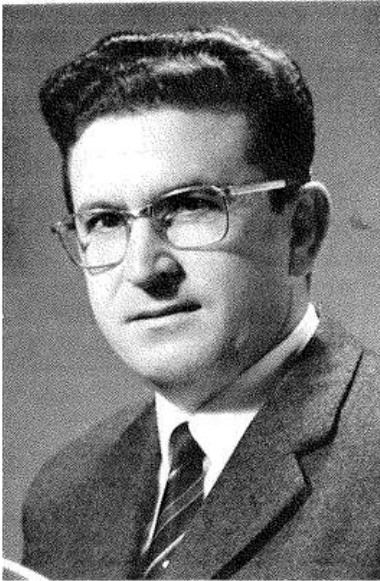
I can tell the world about this  
I can tell the nations that I am blessed  
Tell them what my Jesus has done  
Tell them that the Holy Ghost has come  
And He brought joy, joy, joy,  
To my soul.

## THE PROFITABLE WORD

JUAN A. MONROY

Juan Antonio Monroy was born in Rabat, Morocco, North Africa, June 13, 1929. He had his formal education in Moroccan schools and in the University of Morocco, with special emphasis on literature. His father was an atheist. His mother was a devout Catholic. He attended the Catholic church until he was fourteen when he began to be influenced by atheistic ideas, and especially by the French rationalist writers.

His conversion was rapid. In 1951, a missionary came to Morocco preaching the gospel, and Monroy accepted the doctrine of Christ immediately, being baptized the fourteenth of November of that same year. From then on he dedicated himself to missionary work. He preached among the Arabs in Morocco and later turned to the Spaniards. In Morocco he started three congregations, and in Spain three



others. In addition, he has helped effectively in the development of other congregations in Spain. He always lived in Morocco until he moved to Madrid in June of 1965.

In January, 1956, he was married to Miss Mercedes Herero. They have three daughters: Yolanda, Loida, and Monica.

Fluent as a speaker and writer of four languages, Spanish, French, English, and Arabic, he has traveled extensively throughout Europe, filling speaking engagements, also in northwest Africa and in the United States. As a professional journalist and author, he has written seven books and

has translated six others, four of them from English and two from French.

In Madrid, he carries on a great work sponsored by the Highland Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas. Besides preaching for the congregation which he has started in that capital, he is the translator and speaker for the Spanish Herald of Truth radio program. He edits a twenty-four-page monthly magazine, *Restauracion* (Restoration), and also translates and publishes tracts and books by other writers of the churches of Christ. The latest addition to his labors is the management of a religious bookstore in the heart of Madrid.

He belongs to several international organizations, including the Royal Geographic Society of London, the Society of Authors of Spain, and the Association of Journalists and Writers of Spain, of which he is treasurer.

His favorite Bible verse is Joshua 1:9.

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On the annual Abilene Christian College Bible Lectureship this year, the general subject, according to the explanation of the leaders, is "to develop central and timely Biblical themes in a popular way, but where the presentation will carry a powerful and meaningful lesson in each case."

Following this general subject I have been requested to talk about "The Profitable Word." It is not an easy subject, but it is not difficult either. It depends on the orientation you give to it. I told the leaders my orientation would be a missionary one.

The subject is divided into four main parts:  
The Word in the missionary experience.

The Word in the missionary calling.  
The Word in the missionary psychology.  
The Word in the missionary life.

I would like for my effort here to be of help to someone. But of real help. I am a little candid. The first time I spoke in one of our churches in the United States, a brother told me: "After this sermon I shall never be the same." I was really happy to hear that and I thanked God for touching a soul.

But later on I realized that it is just a prepared sentence. I have heard the expression many times and I have understood that it is just a habit here, as to call the wife honey. When someone comes now after my preaching and tells me: "After this sermon I shall never be the same again," I ask God: "Forgive him, Lord, he wants just to be polite to me."

I do not intend to change anyone with my lecture. But if I help some of you to think upon the missionary problems, I shall be satisfied.

## I

### *THE WORD IN THE MISSIONARY EXPERIENCE*

Concerning the place that the Word has in the Missionary experience, a lot can be said from different angles. On this occasion, I would like to refer to a subject that is up-to-date, that is already hurting Christ's Church, and discrediting many persons.

I am referring to the idea of not supporting native preachers with United States money. This idea was introduced in this country by some American missionaries who did not evaluate the consequences of their words. Slowly this idea has been extended through the Church of Christ in America and gains more followers every day.

A great number of preachers in this country support this idea; most of the missionaries defend it; many elders admit the idea exists; it is being enforced in the mission committees of the churches and it is even taught as a missionary subject in our schools.

Paul says that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Galatians 5:9) and this leaven is hurting a great lump of Christians in the United States and other parts of the world.

Until now, most of the opinions expressed by words or in writing about this idea have been negative. Some Christians of this country have spoken in favor of continuing to support selected native preachers and have protested against the ones that spread the idea of not supporting native preachers with American money, but a real discussion has not yet taken place on this subject.

Not even a dialogue has been started. And this is bad. Misunderstanding hurts countries and people. Cain killed his brother Abel because he did not pay attention or give time to dialogue. We can hurt each other very much, even being Christians, being brethren, and can kill each other spiritually if we do not talk.

As for me, I want to start the dialogue here, today. I want to be free of responsibility before God. The Bible

teaches me to watch the spiritual life of my brethren in Christ, and my brethren in Christ are the ones that have my same faith. It is not my intention to start an argument, but to contribute to an atmosphere of comprehension, calm, and justice, because this is what the Bible tells me to do (Genesis 4:9; 45:24; Ezekiel 3:20-21; I John 2:9-11).

I think I am the right person to deal with this subject. My life is as a bridge between the American missionaries and the native preachers.

I am not American, but I am the missionary of a church in the United States. There are many missionaries and foreign preachers integrated in the churches in this country. I am one of them. I am not really a native preacher, since I was born in Africa and I work for the Lord in Europe. I love my American brethren as sincerely as I love my brethren in other countries. Those special circumstances of being neither an American missionary, nor a native preacher, give me authority to present this subject.

On the other hand, I work in Spain, and Spain is the missionary country that receives less help from the United States than others receive, in proportion to the number of churches established and the work being performed through literature and radio work.

If someone wants exact numbers, he may ask me, and I shall be happy to supply the desired data.

To cover this subject adequately, it would be necessary to write a book. What I am going to do is just to consider briefly some points in connection with the idea of not supporting native preachers with American money. I cannot



say much, because my time is limited and I do not want to spend it all on this subject. Sincerely, I would prefer not to touch the subject. I have enough trouble facing the problems that the world without God presents to me. To spend time and effort discussing these internal problems is not a pleasant task for me, a Spanish Christian. But I deem it necessary and I am making an exception.

a) *It is not a biblical concept.*

I think this for the following reasons:

*First:* It is possible we do not realize it, but there is a contradiction between the God we preach and the missionary policy we practice. If we go to a foreign country preaching a God without nationality (Acts 17:26), who loves all races without exception, we cannot nationalize the money that comes from that same God, talking about "American money," "Mexican money," or "English money."

*Second:* The same thing happens with the message of Christ that we intend to preach. We cannot give atheists and heathens New Testaments where it is written that Christ broke down all the middle walls of partition of races (Ephesians 2:14-16) and then tell them: "You should do your work with your Brazilian money and I shall do mine with my American money," as if money might have soul and spirit and were more important than a human being.

*Third:* The Bible says that the laborer is worthy of his hire (Luke 10:7) and that they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar (I Corinthians 9:13), but nothing is said in any place that the laborer's hire has to come necessarily from his country of birth. The problem is to find laborers really worthy of their hire.

*Fourth:* In the Great Commission, Christ ordered the Jewish apostles to teach the Gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:19). Before His ascension to heaven He repeated the same commandment (Acts 1:8), but He did not say a word about the source of the money to support this great missionary task. If the apostles had thought as some brethren in this country think, Christ's message of salvation would never have come out from Jerusalem.

*Fifth:* Paul says that the love of money is the root of all evil (I Timothy 6:10). It is very sad to see this lack of agreement in the Church of Christ regarding money. It shows to what extent we are being affected by the material pressures of the twentieth century, pressures which harm the morals and good habits, as well as the spirituality, of the individual.

The Bible warns us against the danger of money and we need to remain alert.

b) *It is a discriminatory idea.*

Besides not being biblical, the idea of not supporting native preachers with American money is discriminatory.

*First:* Although in practice it is not so, according to this idea the support of a person would be subject to his nationality. That is, all American missionaries should be supported, because of their nationality, although many of them have not the ability for God's work, and support should be denied to the native ones, because they are not Americans, in spite of the fact that among them are devoted and able workers. If this idea becomes a system it will be a great offense for the Church of Christ.

*Second:* The work in the Lord's vineyard is not a matter of nationalities, but of individuals. Luke, who was perhaps a Greek, Paul, a Jew with Roman nationality, and Timothy, half Jew and half Greek, occupy a higher place in the New Testament than others who were real Jews by birth and nationality and spent more time close to Jesus.

We cannot give more importance to the passport of a person, something so incidental and temporary, than to the work of that person performed for eternity.

*Third:* I do not say that this is a rule, but there are churches that ask much more of the native preachers than of the American missionaries.

I know missionaries who after four or five years of work return to the country without accomplishing anything. And no one tells them anything. They go to another church and that is all. On the contrary, when a native is supported during two or three years, the church for which he preaches is requested to become independent financially and plans are made to cut his support. This is not just.

*Fourth:* Christ told us to be careful regarding offenses (Matthew 18:7). Human ethics, through their rules, teach us to take care of the neighbor's sensibility, in order to not hurt his feelings. And it causes a very unpleasant feeling to hear in God's family words like "American money," "native preachers," "American missionaries," "German money," etc.

c) *It is not a practical idea.*

Let me take one more step. I would not wish at this

point that my missionary brethren be offended. I just try to place the dialogue in the exact place. From the practical point of view, the idea we are discussing here hurts the local churches and many times the whole work.

*First:* To send a missionary to a foreign country, with his family, his furniture, etc., costs the local church thousands of dollars. And in most cases the missionary only remains in the country three or four years. A reason is always found to come back home. The wife has a nervous breakdown, the children have to go to school, etc. The thing is that when they have learned the language a little and may be of some help to the natives, they leave the mission field. And all the money invested in that family has been wasted.

*Second:* The missionary coming out from the United States is used to a higher standard of living than the one usually found in the mission field. And in most cases, and as far as I know, the missionaries keep this standard of living wherever they go. So, to support an American missionary costs the local church three or four times more than to support a native. It depends on the country.

*Third:* I have already said that God's work is a matter of individuals, not of nationalities. But, usually, the native knows better the psychology of his people, speaks the language without difficulty, and if, in addition, he is a spiritual and devoted man, he will be qualified to do a more effective work than a foreign missionary.

It is normal. Just think of a Korean missionary coming for the first time to this country, for example, knowing nothing about American mentality, without knowing the

language and without knowing where to start. I doubt he could ever do a better work in this country than a preacher from Texas or Alabama.

*Fourth:* There is also another well-known factor. International relations suffer today a serious crisis. Nations that are friends today are not tomorrow just because of a change in the government. Many missionaries have been forced to leave Sudan, Nigeria, China, and other countries. No one knows what may happen tomorrow. If the Church of Christ does not try to nurture the talents of the natives and help them to do the work, the day the American missionaries have to leave the country where they work, everything will be lost.

d) *Bad habits.*

One of the strongest objections made for the native's support with American money is that the native preacher gets used to his monthly check, and does nothing to develop the economic possibilities of the congregation, and when the American support is cut, all comes to an end.

It is necessary to keep in mind at this point that in the mission countries the Christians have not the same income as in the United States and the economic development of the churches is much slower. Nevertheless, I could tell you of Christians in these countries making real personal sacrifices for the church.

It is also true that there are native preachers who use the Gospel to live; but you find them anywhere. I know native preachers to whom I would not give even a dollar, because they have not a real interest for God's work.

The danger is to judge all by some of them, and to adopt general attitudes. There are native preachers who are complete failures, it is true. But if because of them you decide not to support any, you should do the same regarding the missionaries. And it would be a great mistake for our churches in the United States to fail to send missionaries to the world just because some of them were not good.

e) *The missionaries at fault.*

I am going to say something that perhaps many ignore. There are native preachers who are real failures and dishonor the Church of Christ. But, many times, it is not their fault, but the fault of American missionaries.

When a missionary arrives in a foreign country, he feels upon his shoulders the responsibility of the work. His wish is to write at once to the elders of the church that supports him, to the mission committee and to his friends, telling them good news.

He does not know the people well. He has not in the country other mature Christians to give him advice, he has not elders to guide him, and he has to make his own decisions.

When he has the first one converted he is moved. He feels the same emotion of the fisherman who finds his first pearl. He takes care of him. He pets him. He invites him to his home. He helps him financially, and after a few months, before this man has the adequate preparation, he writes to the elders of his church to find support for this man. And all say the same thing: "This is an unusual man...."

But then what should be expected to happen does happen. Lacking a real spiritual life, the man just lives his life with his support without doing anything. The missionary realizes he has made a mistake, he writes the elders to cut his support, and then he already has an enemy. The native preacher has failed. This missionary comes back to America and, of course, opposes the support of native preachers.

But let us be realistic. Was not the recommendation regarding support for the native preacher premature? Who is the responsible one, the preacher who was never a converted man, or the missionary who supported the man to get his help and companionship?

I know many cases such as this one. In Switzerland, one of these native preachers was against the church when they cut his support and wrote in the papers against it. I know several cases in Latin America where the same thing has happened. I do not quote names in order not to offend anyone. But if missionaries could go to the mission field with better preparation and a more sincere spirit, many of these problems could be avoided.

The solution it seems to me, is to find the proper person, and whether he is an American missionary or a native preacher does not matter. A church should not support a man if he is not worthy, regardless of his nationality, but we should support with all our power the man who knows how to do God's work, regardless of the language he speaks.

## II

*THE WORD IN THE MISSIONARY CALLING*

After all I have said you may have the impression that I have more sympathy for the native preachers than for the American missionaries. And that is all wrong. I sympathize with all those who work for the Lord, regardless of their nationality.

In Spain and in the whole world we need more missionaries, many missionaries. The United States is today the only country that can send them and it ought to send them.

They should be men with a very definite missionary calling based on the Word. When we talk about missionary calling we go to the New Testament, and this is normal, since the evangelization of the world belongs to the church and not to the Jewish people.

Nevertheless, for our need to adjust our missionary calling to the teaching of the Word, the Old Testament prophets have a lot to tell us. Their lives may help us in the analysis and responsibility of our missionary calling. Let us see.

a) *They were called by God.*

This is not a method, but an absolute need, completely necessary, even though the call today comes by providential means instead of miraculously, as in Bible times.

God himself told Isaiah:



“Go, and tell this people” (Isaiah 6:9).

And Jeremiah:

“For thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak” (Jeremiah 1:7).

And Ezekiel:

“In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin’s captivity, The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him.”

(Ezekiel 1:2-3)

“And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.”

(Ezekiel 2:1)

The missionary has to be a man called by God for a special ministry. If he has not felt the call, if he went because the church sent him, or because he wanted the missionary adventure, he will fail, he will be unable to continue.

b) *God was stronger than they.*

Many of the prophets resisted God’s call. Not all of them tried to run and hide from God, as Jonah did, but they reasoned with God in order to try to dissuade Him from sending them where they did not wish to go.

We have the sad protest of Jeremiah, his wish to renounce the prophetic call and his final submission (Jeremiah 20:7-9).

Amos thinks the same:

"The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3:8).

If God calls, to resist is a mistake. We should go. He is wiser. He knows more than we do.

c) *They thought of themselves as bearers of God's voice.*

The prophets never talked about themselves. They constantly said "Thus saith the Lord." They considered themselves bearers of God's voice, and interpreters of His will.

On Moses's call we find this aspect of the prophetic vocation specified very clearly, and it should be considered as necessary also for the call to missionary service in our day:

"And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

(Exodus 3:11-15)

The missionary has to be that: a voice to repeat God's words, a translator of God's will for the people.

d) *They did not go further than permitted.*

The great confusion inside Christendom today is because pastors, priests, preachers, and missionaries speak where the Bible is silent.

The missionary has to be an interpreter of God's will, but he cannot go any further. There are things in God's Word the knowledge of which is not revealed and when we try to interpret them we create confusion around us. God's law says:

"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."

(Deuteronomy 29:29)

When the son of the Shunammite died, the prophet Elisha admitted that he did not know the reason why the mother was suffering:

"And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told me."

(II Kings 4:27)

We cannot expect to find an explanation for each verse in the Bible, because to do it may lead souls to confusion instead of salvation.

e) *They were not afraid of ridicule.*

God's prophets were men not afraid of ridicule, just because they were sure of the mission received.

Isaiah was ordered to walk undressed through the streets (Isaiah 20:2).

Jeremiah was told to carry a yoke upon his neck (Jeremiah 27:1-2 and 28:10).

They were strange orders and apparently ridiculous, but God had a purpose for them and the prophets obeyed with meekness.

Peter did not understand at first the meaning of the sheet coming down from heaven full of unclean animals, and it was even harder for him to understand the strange order to kill and eat. But he was able to understand it later and glorify God for it in the church.

If the order comes from God it cannot appear ridiculous to the ones serving Him in the missionary field.

f) *They directed their message to the individual's conscience.*

They used for it a clear speech and direct. It was necessary to be with God or without God, but not playing between both attitudes.

Almost at the end of his ministry, Moses talks to Israel and says:

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and

that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

(Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

Elijah challenged the ones who wanted to follow Jehovah and Baal (I Kings 18:21).

A missionary has to speak with the necessary energy to provoke a reaction in the weak and timid. We have arrived at the time mentioned by Paul, when the conscience is gone; and to wake it up it is necessary to have a great love for the work, because much energy and courage are required of those who would be doers of the word.

g) *They denounced the false religious practices.*

The first chapter of Isaiah has a brave speech against the ones with non-acceptable practices:

“Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.”

(Isaiah 1:10-15)

When the first protestant missionaries arrived in Nigeria, after the occupation of the country by England, they decided to respect the Mohammedan religion found in the North of the country, and therefore, they devoted their work mainly among those with no religion. This was in compliance with a law of the English Government. This mistaken missionary policy has perpetuated the religious hatred that exists today among the North and South Nigerians.

In our days, ecumenical days, we do not want to denounce religious error in order not to offend people. We leave the individual continuing in his practices although we know they are wrong. The result of this is that for the sake of pleasant relationships we are condemning souls, letting them believe what they want, and to practice what they like, even if it is contrary to God's will.

The missionary has to be energetic and brave, and has to be ready to denounce the dogmas and practices of false religions. We cannot be traitors to God out of respect for man.

h) *They cried out against the religious hypocrisy.*

It is necessary to denounce anything false in other religious systems, but we cannot tolerate hypocrisy in our own religion either. The prophets of the Old Testament were very forceful in both cases.

Jeremiah, talking to the Jews that considered themselves as religious, said:

"The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of

Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.”  
(Jeremiah 7:1-7)

There is a bad tendency to think of ourselves as better than others, just because we do not believe what they believe, and do not worship as they do. But inwardly we are like pharisees, taking out the mosquito and swallowing the camel.

None serving God may allow this.

i) *They called to repentance.*

The calls to repentance in the Old Testament had a national character; they were different from the ones in the New Testament that are more personal and directed to the soul of the individual to admit his sin before God.

They fulfilled an important mission, and this mission was never neglected by the prophets. Isaiah is one of the most clear ones on the subject:

“Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as

scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

(Isaiah 1:16-18)

Ezekiel also pleads with the people to return to God (Ezekiel 33:11).

The warning of Christ that those who do not repent will be condemned, is still true (Luke 13:3).

The strong call, the continued call to repentance to the sinner and his reconciliation with God, has to be the central nerve of our Christian preaching.

j) *And reconciliation with God.*

The prophetic method was entirely emotional, as we have said. The message of the prophet was straight to the heart of the man, to his feelings, to all his emotions. It was a clear message, energetic, definite. He sought repentance in the people and their reconciliation with God.

Isaiah, in his wonderful Chapter 55, says:

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David . . . Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and



let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”  
(Isaiah 55:1-3; 6, 7)

Job also trusts this message:

“If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher than a child’s: he shall return to the days of his youth: He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness. He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.”

(Job 33:23-28)

### III

#### *THE WORD IN THE MISSIONARY PSYCHOLOGY*

To go out to the missionary field with the support secured and with a great desire to work is not enough. Feelings are necessary, but are not enough. The missionary has to be rich in both intellectual and emotional attributes. There are missionaries that are all feelings and others all mind. It is necessary to combine both qualities.

As a part of a Christian system, the missionary has to study the evolutions of this system through the centuries and understand that a Christendom mainly composed of

human dogmas has been responsible for the present situation of unbelief.

It is a tragedy and a shame to see that all the great creators of movements that have attacked Christianity from all angles, denying God's existence and taking away from man all the moral and spiritual values granted by the Creator, were persons that during their youth were closely related with one or another type of Christianity.

*Marx*, whose parents were Jews, was converted to Christianity when he was only seven years old. What spiritual benefits did he obtain with the change of religion? The Christianity that he knew was indifferent to the misfortunes of the poor; it was subservient to the rich; it was concerned only for its own political ambitions; the robes of its ministers were stained with the blood of their religious wars. What could such a Christianity offer to him?

*Voltaire*, the tireless enemy of God and destroyer of religion, was during six years (from 1704 to 1710), a brilliant pupil of the Jesuits in the Catholic school "Louis le Grand."

*Stalin*, the strong man of atheistic communism, was during his youth a student in a Catholic seminary.

When the Jew *Spinoza* was excommunicated by the leaders of the synagogue in Amsterdam because of his criticisms of the Bible, he went several times to Protestant denominations looking for something better for his mind and soul, but he did not find it.

The father and the mother of *Nietzsche* came from a fam-

ily of Lutheran pastors. And Nietzsche, himself, who said he had killed God and replaced him with the super-man of his imagination, studied to be a pastor till he was 17, then renounced Theology.

*Emmanuel Kant* belonged to a very religious family. His mother was a devoted member of the Pietist movement, which was a reaction against the worldly aspect of Protestantism. Kant studied during eight years (from 1732 to 1740) in a religious school of the movement.

Also *Kierkegaard* was brought up in the religious principles of Moravian Pietism. His education was very religious. He wrote that the crucified Christ was shown to him at every minute, therefore, the Cross was the only image and idea he had about the Saviour. Nevertheless, when he was 20 he rebelled against the church.

*Rousseau*, another genius of religious rationalism, also spent his young years near a Protestant pastor and he almost decided to be a pastor too. But he left Protestantism, then became a Catholic, and finished by attacking Christianity with all his intelligence, which was not small.

*Hegel and Straus*, two other chiefs of rationalism who hurt the faith so much, were graduated in Theology at the University of Tubinga and practiced as Protestant pastors for a time, but renounced the ministry while they were young.

*Ernest Renan*, also a famous rationalist, author of the *Life of Jesus* a best-seller in all times, studied during 13 years in different Catholic seminaries but rejected the priesthood in order to fight Christianity.

The famous rationalist of recent years, *Alfredo Loisy*, from France, was also a Catholic priest. He became famous, among other things, because of his attacks against the inspiration of the Bible in such a way that most of his works are prohibited by the Vatican.

What happened that these European intellectuals have led their lives through different ways and even contrary to the doctrine of Christ? Christendom has spent mountains of paper writing against the doctrinal immoralities of these movements. But, is not Christendom directly responsible for these heresies? Christendom has intended to feed the mind and conscience of man with pure human teachings, refusing the simple and brilliant principles of the New Testament, has corrupted its members with power and temporary pleasure, and the result has been the desertion of the few and the indifference of the hundreds.

American Christianity, of Protestant orientation compared with the European Catholicism, has not produced better fruits.

*Ingersoll*, the famous atheist, author of such destructive books as *Some Mistakes of Moses* and others similar, was the son of a Protestant pastor.

*Thomas Paine*, another popular American atheist and author, wrote, among other negative books, *The Age of Reason*. He was brought up in the rigid principles of the Quakers, the religion of which the present President of the United States, Richard Nixon, is a member.

Of the five American winners of the Nobel prize for literature none has been known as a defender of the doc-

trine of Jesus. Some have been quite the contrary.

The first of them, *Sinclair Lewis*, not only rebelled against the Christian faith, but has revealed corrupt morals and religious hypocrisy in *Elmer Gantry*, his masterpiece. The deep knowledge of the subject shows how well Lewis knew the corruption of some Protestant denominations in America.

*Eugene O'Neill*, the well-known dramatist, author of *Desire Under the Elms*, who as a student spent his time in several Catholic universities in the United States, expresses his religious fatalism in *Anna Christie* and states in *Mourning Becomes Electra* that to violate the social mores is worse than to offend the divinity. O'Neill writes and lives as a practicing atheist.

The third American winner of the Nobel prize, Mrs. *Pearl Buck* is also a casualty of this religious breakdown. Mrs. Buck was born in China, where her father was working as a Protestant missionary. She married a missionary, John Lossing Buck, with whom she lived five years in China and from whom she was later divorced.

If it is true that Mrs. Buck has not attacked the Christian faith, it is also true that Christianity has nothing to thank her for. The greatest contribution of her books has been to popularize a knowledge of Chinese customs at the beginning of this century, but has done nothing to develop nor strengthen faith.

*William Faulkner* had a religious education that was almost Puritanic. As a good southerner he was brought up in the purist Protestant conservatism. But his works reflect

his disparagement of Christian values. He is a wonderful painter of American life, as was Lewis, although from different points of view, but reading his books no one will be converted to Christianity nor improve his spiritual life.

It is true that Faulkner touched the subject of guilt and salvation in *Requiem for a Nun* and dealt with religious values in his work titled *A Fable*, but from a completely human standpoint, with a completely human vision of these subjects. Redemption and expiation in the works of Faulkner come through suffering and death, and not because of a divine plan of salvation.

His book entitled *Sanctuary* attacks the religious hypocrisy that is found in Southern Puritanism, and the impaired spiritual values of Christendom.

*Ernest Hemingway*, the last American winner of the Nobel prize for literature, was not interested at all in Christian morality, so when he was tired of life he shot himself and went to the eternity in which he never believed.

Hemingway confessed that he learned to write by reading the Bible, but the spiritual influence of God's Book in his life was little.

His work is a continuous meditation on death, since he was always afraid of it.

*Death in the Evening*, *Siesta*, and *Bloody Summer* are a mournful song to death, to the rough death of the Spanish bullrings. In his masterpiece, *The Old Man and the Sea* he talks to the fish that wants to take his life.

'You want my death, fish,' thinks the old man.

'You are right. Kill me. I do not care who kills the other.'

Hemingway delighted his readers through well written-books, but always conveying pessimism, anguish, and hopelessness. They lead to frustration of life more than to spiritual care of the soul.

I mention separately *Thomas S. Eliot*; although he was born in Saint Louis, Missouri, at the time he received the Nobel prize for literature in 1948, he was a British subject, having renounced his American citizenship in 1927.

This poet is the only one among the great authors born in America who reflects a spiritual preoccupation in his works. The same year he adopted the British nationality he became a member of the Anglican Church, and after that time he wrote about religious subjects. So, in *Ash Wednesday* he finds in religion a remedy to his deep anguish. *The Rock* is full of Bible verses, and *The Family Reunion* has as its theme the subject of salvation.

It is a great thing that Eliot has not failed in the Christian faith as many other writers of his time, but we cannot say either that he did more than to resolve a deep personal problem, being of little help to others.

All of these writers could have helped the Christian message with their human wisdom. But they did not do it. And, besides, they turned their backs to Christ. They were victims of unbelief. And it is necessary to find the cause of this unbelief within Christendom, in the leaders of denominationalism, who have been an obstacle more than a help to the message of Christ.

They have presented a disfigured Christianity, humanized in its general lines, a Christianity composed only of human elements, and the result has been desertion and apostasy.

Nicolas Berdiaeff says it very well:

“The Christian humanity through history has committed a triple treason regarding Christianity. First, changing it, then departing from it, and finally — and that was the worst thing — cursing it for the damage she has created. When Christianity is criticized, the sins of the Christian society are criticized, and the wrong interpretation and deformation of the law of Christ, by Christians. And it is due to those changes and sins of humanity that the world departs further and further from Christianity.”

#### IV

#### *THE WORD IN THE MISSIONARY LIFE*

The Bible is not only an instrument of work in the life of a missionary, but has to be, above all, a spiritual fire to sustain his burning zeal, to purify him in his failing moments, and to enlighten him when surrounded by the darkness of this world.

Someone has said that in the life of every servant of God there is a Gethsemane of moral depression and a Mount Tabor of optimism. This is true.

Jeremiah had been called to God's service. He had fought and suffered, and that intense activity led him to a feeling of despair so intense that he hated even his own life and tried to forget God.



But he reacted. In the middle of the storm he saw a light. He could not leave God because God was inside him, He was flesh of his own flesh, and was spiritually linked to His spirit:

“...But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones: and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay”(Jeremiah 20:9).

That fire in the bones indicates that God was there, in him, with him; God had told him:

“Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 1:8).

Jeremiah knew this. Now that the storm was gone, now that the clouds of doubt were removed, he could see God beside him; that He had always been:

“But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one” (Jeremiah 20:11).

Every time God’s servant feels that fire in his bones, that fire stronger than self will, it is because God is in his life.

In the Bible fire appears closely related to the manifestations of God.

a) *The cities in the plain*

“Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and he

overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground" (Genesis 19:24-25).

b) *The revelation at Sinai*

"And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed" (Exodus 3:2).

c) *The pillar of fire*

"And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people" (Exodus 13:21-22).

d) *The answer to Elijah*

"And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God" (I Kings 18:36-39).

e) *The burning coals of Isaiah*

"Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (Isaiah 6:6-7).

f) *The baptism of fire*

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Matthew 3:11).

g) *The fire tongues*

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them" (Acts 2:1-3).

h) *Paul's conversion*

"And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 9:3-4).

i) *The world destruction*

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (II Peter 3:10).

*CONCLUSION*

The fire is not God. It is a manifestation of God. It indicates that God lives in man and acts through him, and that He is always present.

In a large square in Berlin there is a torch that is continually burning. The flame is always alive. The inhabitants of Berlin say that the torch will continue burning until Germany may be reunified.

God's fire should be always alive in His servants, until all mankind is afire with love for Him.

GO...  
GLENN OWEN

*Birth:* June 25, 1936

*Baptized:* October 12, 1947 by Lloyd Moyer

*Married:* Marlene Mueller, June 8, 1956

*Children:* Randel (10 years); Glenn Paul (8 years)

Attended Abilene Christian College 1954-1956

Places preached: Fargo, Texas 1956-1958

Iowa Park, Texas 1959

Eastridge—Fort Worth 1960-

*Miscellaneous*

1. Held meetings in Argentina, Uruguay, Spain and Brazil
2. Speaker on World Radio-Brasil since its beginning having presented 1,192 programs in Portuguese.
3. Speaker on World Radio-Brasil on weekly program in Spanish.



4. Hold 24 three-day campaigns per year in Brazilian interior cities.
5. Speaker on World-Radio Brasil on weekly program in English.
6. Speaker in first campaign held by group in Brasil in 1963; average attendance of 850 for four nights.
7. Member of original group of 13 families moving to Brasil in June, 1961.

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In the English language, two-thirds of God is "Go." Golgotha and gospel both begin with what became later the di-

vine imperative for the disciples of the Master. "Go ye into all the world . . ." <sup>1</sup> Evangelism has its roots in eternity—in the very person of God. "It would be great if God accepted us when we came to him in humble penitence; it would be precious that God should wait for the sinner to come back; but that God should go out and seek the sinner is something sublime and something new. Here, indeed, is the good news of God." <sup>2</sup> The first command given to the disciples after the resurrection was, "Go quickly and tell . . . that he is risen from the dead . . ." <sup>3</sup> The next verse gives us an insight and inspiration for the going into the whole world with the gospel of Christ. "So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy . . ." <sup>4</sup> Kittel tells us that "In all Semitic languages . . . the sense of joy is contained in the stem of the word Gospel." <sup>5</sup> As the first witnesses to the empty tomb departed with fear and joy, it is time that we recaptured the joy of telling others of the resurrected Christ. In early profane literature, the word "gospel" was the technical term for the news of a victory. The messenger or runner would come from the place of battle and declare victory over the enemy or the death of the opponent. The resurrection of Jesus is the

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1 See Mark 16:15, 16—American Standard Version, (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1929)

2 See Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), p. 110.

3 See Matthew 28:7—Revised Standard Version, (New Jersey: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1959)

4 See Matthew 28:8—Revised Standard Version, (New Jersey: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1959)

5 See Kittel, Gerhard, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), Vol. II, p. 707.

greatest victory of all times—victory over death such that Paul could exult:

“Death is swallowed up in victory. Oh death, where is thy victory? Oh death, where is thy sting? But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>6</sup>

Jesus’ victory over death and the grave, not only for Himself but for us, is the message that we as His disciples must go quickly and tell. Never before has the world been so ready and so needy and so bereft of the news of the victory, the gospel of God.

### I. Why Should We Go?

That Jesus should be raised from the dead is within itself a most startling thought. That He should command that His victory be heralded to the world through men is no less shocking. It is shocking because of its human impossibility and its divine reality. If it is humanly impossible to go, then why were we told “Go into all the world . . .”? Jesus knew that life comes from life, that it takes Christians to make Christians, that only fire kindles fire.

We must go in order that we ourselves might be saved. Lincoln said, “Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves and, under a just God, cannot long retain it.” Ezekiel said it better:

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<sup>6</sup> See I Corinthians 15:54, 55, 57—Revised Standard Version, (New Jersey: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1959)

"...I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul."<sup>7</sup>

Albert Camus, Nobel Prize winner, in his novel *THE FALL* tells of a prominent French lawyer who turned away when hearing a drowning woman's cry for help one night. Years later, this same lawyer, a broken, shattered, hulk of the man he had once been, talks to himself in an Amsterdam bar in the following, one-person dialogue:

"Please tell me what happened to you one night on the quays of the Seine and how you managed never to risk your life. Oh, young woman, throw yourself into the water again so that I may a second time have the chance of saving us both."<sup>8</sup>

Why should we go? To save us both. Why are we to preach? To save others and ourselves.

We must go to survive as the church of God. According to Dwight Baker, outstanding Baptist missionary to the Middle East, the reason for the disappearance of what he

<sup>7</sup> See Ezekiel 3:17-19— Revised Standard Version, (New Jersey: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1959)

<sup>8</sup> See Camus, Albert, *A queda*. (Lisboa: Edicao Livros do Brasil), Portuguese version, p. 219.



calls "Christendom" from North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia Minor, is not that persecution stilled the mouths of the preachers. He even quotes Tertullian to prove the contrary, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."<sup>9</sup> Yet, less than three centuries from the time that the gospel entered Africa, it had lost its identity. Baker says:

"A factor in the near obliteration of the church in the Mediterranean areas was its almost total abandonment of its early missionary thrust. The evangelizing spirit in these churches died long before the forces of Islam began their triumphant march across the East."<sup>10</sup>

Why go into all the world? Our very survival depends upon it. The gospel of God is like a muscle—it is used or it loses its power.

## II. When Should We Go?

From the human point of view, there has never been a time when it was totally right for us to preach. There has always been a lack of something—money, men, material, or a hundred other excuses. I am sure that, had the apostles taken stock of their physical, financial, or even spiritual qualifications, they would have become once again fishers of fish. And, yet, immediately they began to spread the gospel to all the world. Like the prophets, they knew that "today is the day of salvation." With the gospel, as with Christ's coming, there is no tomorrow. We have

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<sup>9</sup> See CHRISTIANITY TODAY, *How A Whole Church Vanished*, Vol. XI, No. 4, p. 195.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*

quoted, to the chagrin of false prophets and spurious doctrines, "But though we or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached to you, let him be anathema."<sup>11</sup> The gospel, without its urgency, is another. It just may be that we, through our neglect, are preaching this "other" gospel: the gospel of leisurely preaching to men who are lulled by our loss of fire into thinking that there is plenty of time for things holy. We rise in holy horror against those who would set a date for the coming of Jesus, but we act as if we know that it could not be today.

A short while ago John McDonald and I made a trip to the interior of Brazil to contact a family that was interested in obeying the gospel. They had done the correspondence course and were daily listeners of the daily program on World Radio Brazil. Upon our arrival and contact with this very charming family, we were delighted to learn that they were all ready for baptism. We rented a car, looked for an adequate place, and baptized them by headlight. As we were returning from the baptism, the father told me that he had thought about waiting until Sunday (this was on Friday) so that people could be invited to attend the baptismal service; but he had decided against it since, in his words, "the Lord might come before then." Can it be that this man, a Caterpillar operator for the county, has a better grasp of things important than we? Those of us who know the difference between pre-millennial and

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<sup>11</sup> See Galatians 1:8 — Revised Standard Version, (New Jersey: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1959)

post-millennial may have lost the sense of the "now-millennial."

When should we launch out and preach the gospel? William Barclay, in his book *THE ALL-SUFFICIENT CHRIST*, says:

"In 1271 the greatest empire in the world was the empire of Kublai Khan. He sent his ambassadors to the Pope with a request. 'You shall go to your High Priest and shall pray him on our behalf to send men, a hundred men, skilled in your religion and so I should be baptized and then I should baptize all my barons and great men and their subjects will receive baptism and so there will be more Christians here than there in your parts.' But the Pope was too busy playing politics. For eighteen long years precisely nothing was done and not a man was sent. Then in 1289 a mere handful was dispatched; too few, too late, and the chance was gone."<sup>12</sup>

A hundred men could have changed the destiny of Turkey, India, and all of China. While we have no sympathy for Catholicism and its doctrines, the story is too painfully close to us for us to rejoice at their failure. In Latin America alone over 180 million people wallow in poverty and indolence. Inflation has shaken their faith in money, and hunger daily reminds them that human governments are not the solution. South America is a seething mass of open hearts. We cannot deceive ourselves into thinking that conditions will always be as they are today. We cannot afford to delay. Are there not a hundred men in this audience to

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<sup>12</sup> See Barclay, William, *The All-Sufficient Christ*, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952), p. 65-66.

day to change at least the destiny of South America?

### III. Where Shall We Go?

#### A. A word to missionaries:

It is to our discredit that we have come to equate missions with foreign fields. Mission reports are always with slides and deal with customs, climate, and conditions. Those of us who left the United States for foreign fields are partially responsible for this. In order to raise funds and gain sympathy we have often expressed our concern only for the lost "across the seas." We have glamorized foreign missions and missionaries to the point that we have forgotten that the field is not Brazil or Mexico or Spain or Africa—the field is the world. When Jesus spoke of "the world," He had in mind everywhere there was a man—Abilene, Fort Worth, Dallas, Nashville, Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Tokyo, London, and the rest. He had in mind that *you go into your world* with the gospel of grace. Our worlds, by necessity, are not and cannot be the same. Mine is a recording studio in Brazil; yours may be your classroom, teacher's desk, service station, or dormitory room. But, it is your world and you are the one responsible for the taking of the gospel to it and the living of the gospel in it. Missionaries, let us leave off the glorification of the difficulties of learning a new language and adjustment to a different culture and climate if it is to mean that we are to be participants in the false conception that mission work is only done after passports, airline tickets, and a "funny kind of money." We have lost the sense of mission if we have lost the sense of our lost neighbor.

#### B. A word to preachers:

In the better sense of the word, all full-time preachers are "professionals," and they should be. It is more than evident, however, that the preaching of the gospel to the whole world will never be done by the "professionals." While Jesus commissioned several men to "full-time work," I cannot believe that He ever expected that these men would be the only proclaimers of His resurrection. They were not, and the gospel spread through the earth. Whether the field is Sao Paulo, Brazil, or St. Paul, Minnesota, the success of preaching of the Word is always in direct relation to the involvement of members in evangelism. There can be no such thing as evangelism, either foreign or domestic, by "proxy." Missions do not begin anywhere; they are everywhere—everywhere there is a dedicated child of God there is a mission.

Monroy taught me this two years ago in Lima, Peru, in a most graphic manner. On three different occasions we rode in a taxi together. The pattern was always the same—a statue of the virgin Mary on the dash of the car; an intense interest in the soul of the driver from Juan, even if it did not mean reaching him by the typewriter, which is Juan's most effective pulpit; a winning smile; a pat on the back; and heart-to-heart conversation about the driver's soul. Monroy would grin and say, "Hombre, don't you know that God does not want you to have this idol in your car or in your life?" Would that we would follow his example. Too many of us are interested in souls only from the pulpit.

"It is indeed passing strange that the same preacher who pleads so earnestly for the souls of men from the pulpit, if placed alongside those same precious souls in personal contact, will treat them as if he did not care. The same

evangelist who so fervently prays and preaches for the salvation of the lost in the pulpit does not say a word to the lost one beside him on the bus or train, or to those who have lived next door to him 'at home.' I say there is something wrong with the man. It can be nothing short of a failure in motives. We have been seeking the approval of men and not of God. When we are placed in the company of sinners who are not at the moment interested in hearing of Christ, rather than face a little disapproval or disinterest or a little deflating of the ego, we keep quiet. When it is the popular thing to do, when we have the floor and everyone is for us, then how bold we do become. From all such hypocrisy, O God, deliver us."<sup>13</sup>

While we must carry out the divinely-appointed task that is ours with the efficiency and dedication worthy of our hire, we must at the same time remember that a pharisaic-professionalism is one of the greatest ills afflicting those who preach.

We must by all means discover some way to involve the church in its own mission without the which it has no right to exist. Elton Trueblood has said that religion is the world's largest spectator sport. All are glad at victory, many attend, but few say, with Isaiah, "Here am I, send me." We have claimed and proclaimed to be the New Testament church; but for the most part, we have denied its mission—we live in the world of the mighty word and the empty deed. We live in the world of the projector and the film-strip and the amplifier and the printed card and the recorded speech, but not the spontaneous overflowing of a

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<sup>13</sup> See DeWalt, Don, *If You Want To Preach*, (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1957), p. 34.

Christ-filled heart. Our methods have become our masters. We have not yet understood that adding more wheels is a poor way to make up for having less steam. We have garbled our terms. We say, "He is the missionary of the church," not realizing that we are all the missionaries of Christ. Harry Boer, in his book *PENTECOST AND MISSIONS*, points out that the apostles and early Christians did not go into all the world simply because Jesus said so. Their spreading of the gospel, according to Boer, was not so much obedience to a command as it was the natural outpouring of an overflowing presence of the person of Jesus. In Acts 8, we read that they went everywhere preaching the Word. We have given emphasis to the fact that they went preaching. I think it better to understand this passage to say that they went and wherever they went they preached. Preaching was not the result of their going; the going merely gave a wider scope to their preaching. The same ones that *from* Jerusalem went preaching the Word most assuredly preached it while they were *in* Jerusalem. Missionaries cannot anymore preach the gospel for us than they can go to heaven for us. We cannot salve our consciences into thinking that we are reaching the world by sending someone to preach for us if we ourselves are not preaching in our own world.

#### IV. Who Should Go?

It is impossible for us, however, for the most part, to equate mission work in foreign fields with the mission work at home. The general theme of this speech has understood the preaching of the gospel away from home. This is a noble theme; a Christ-centered task. What kind of men should be selected and sent out with the message of mercy? It is

not possible to give a list of total qualifications, but a few ideas are in order.

A) *There must be a passion for souls.* In his little book *GOD, MEN, AND MISSIONS*, David B. Woodward says:

“Francis Xavier, who founded the Society of Jesus, led his Jesuits into many new countries in the sixteenth century. Travelling as far as Japan, he is said to have mastered in 52 kingdoms and to have baptized over a million persons. The genuine missionary passion of these men is illustrated by those priests who offered themselves again and again as slaves to Chinese merchants in order to enter the tightly-closed ports of China. Their efforts failed, but they were prepared to reach the unevangelized at any cost.”<sup>14</sup>

We puzzle ourselves as to how the exponents of a religion so far removed from primitive New Testament Christianity can be so dedicated. We shame ourselves by turning back because the language is too hard, the food is strange, and the grandparents are lonely. Paul and passion are synonyms of evangelism. We have yet to see a man with the missionary passion of Paul. In II Corinthians 5:11, 20, are these words:

“Therefore knowing the fear of the Lord we persuade men but what we are is known to God and I hope it is known also to your conscience. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us, we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”<sup>15</sup>

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14 See Woodward, David Brainerd, *God, Men, and Missions*, (California: Gospel Light Publications, 1964), p. 59.

15 See II Corinthians 5:11, 20—American Standard Version, (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1929)



What was Paul's attitude as to his own personal commitment to evangelism?

"Though I be free from all men yet have I made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more. To the weak I became as weak that I might gain the weak. I made all things to all men that I might by all means save some."<sup>16</sup>

Paul was an evangelist because evangelism meant *everything* to Paul. I sometimes feel that we are evangelists because it means *something* to us. The reason for the difference between our evangelism and Paul's is the difference of the *everything* to Paul and the *something* to us.

B) *Courage and Faith*. Passion for souls, or we could call it zeal, is not enough. For a man to serve God, especially in a land not his own, he must have courage and faith. However, Paul said, "We... put no confidence in the flesh."<sup>17</sup> I asked several of my colleagues what was their opinion as to why more people do not leave for foreign fields. I was surprised to note that the answer most given was a lack of confidence. I asked myself, "Confidence in whom?" If we have our confidences in the flesh, we should not go. If we have our confidences in God, He will do great things through us. Let us learn from two women who went to the tomb of Jesus knowing that they, by themselves, could not remove the stone. I can hear them discussing it. "Don't you know that the soldiers will be there? Have you ever thought about how heavy that stone is?" But, they went and

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<sup>16</sup> See I Corinthians 9:19, 22 — Revised Standard Version, (New Jersey: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1959)

<sup>17</sup> See Philippians 3:3 — American Standard Version, (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1929)

when they arrived the stone had already been removed. There is no perfect time to go. If you are young, you should not leave your parents. If you are middle-aged, there is education to complete. If you are older, your children need to be in an American school. No time is the right time.

C) *Committed to the Cause.* Perhaps the most important qualification of all is the realization that the cause is yours. It is not the elders', not the mission committee's, not even the church's; but yours. This means total commitment to it. No quitting, no turning back, and no giving up. It means that even if you do not have a church as wonderful to you as mine has been to me, it is still your cause; and shabby treatment, slow-coming decisions, lack of correspondence, and insufficient support are not enough to make you give up the cause that is yours. As long as it is the mission of the church instead of your own personal commitment to Christ, it is better that you stay where you can be lost in the Sunday morning crowd and let your service be only in the formal worship hour. Leighton Ford, in his book *THE CHRISTIAN PERSUADER*, tells of a missionary in west Africa. It seems that they met him at the airport while on their way to a crusade. Ford says,

"We found he had labored in that Muslim center for ten years. One of the group asked, 'How many converts have you had?' 'Oh,' he thought, 'one, two, perhaps three.' 'Three converts in ten years! Why do you stay?' 'Why do I stay?' His face mirrored his surprise at the thoughtless question. 'I stay because Jesus Christ put me here!'"<sup>18</sup>

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18 See Ford, Leighton, *The Christian Persuader*. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966), p. 37.

I must add that it is not commitment to a mission but to the Master of the mission. It is not a commitment to the lure of foreign fields or the excitement of a new world. It is a deep, abiding sense of a mission that has its roots in the very breast of Jesus Christ. It must, therefore, come from men who are themselves close to Christ. "Let a man get close to Christ and he will become a man with a missionary heart."<sup>19</sup>

It is the very heart of preaching that preaching is from the heart. Brother Batsell Baxter came to Abilene several years ago to lecture to young preachers, and the best thing he said, at least to me, was, "You cannot give what you have not got." This having it and being it and it being you will give you the commitment necessary to carry out the Great Commission. It will give you the courage to go in spite of danger and discouragement. I have read of a Coast Guard unit that was summoned on a stormy night to rescue survivors from a sinking vessel. One member of the crew was fearful. "Captain, we will never get back." "We do not have to come back; we only have to go."<sup>20</sup>

The preaching of the gospel wherever it might be, but especially in foreign fields, must be done by men who have had their Garden of Gethsemane and have risen to say from the heart "not my will but Thine be done."

D) *Prepared.* The apostle Paul said, "... it was God's good

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19 See Maxwell, L. E., *Abandoned to Christ*, (Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955), p. 203.

20 See Havner, Vance, *Why Not Just Be Christians?*, (New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company), p. 52.

pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”<sup>21</sup> Paul did not say that the world would be saved by foolish preachers, but by the foolishness of preaching. As a young man I sought the advice of a man who had been in Italy under fire for many years. “What are some of the qualifications for a missionary, Brother Paden?” The answer was so short it distressed me: “Know your Bible.” Fourteen years later, more than half of that time spent on the field, if someone were to ask me the same question, my answer would be, “Know your Bible.” It is understood that knowing the Bible is only important as this knowledge helps us to know Him of whom the Bible speaks. It can never be assumed that a knowledge of the Bible is a substitute for knowledge of Christ. I used to wonder why so many men, after spending some time on the field, felt a desire to come back and “go to school.” I erroneously thought that it was an excuse to leave. I strongly feel now that it was a genuine recognition of a lack of preparation. God can use all men; but interestingly enough, it seems He has mostly used prepared men. Know the Bible, know the Christ of the Bible, or go back to your boats and mend your nets, for Christ cannot use you.

The real true men of God of the first century could not be suppressed. They preached in Jerusalem, Samaria, Damascus, Antioch, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Athens, and Rome. They testified in the temple, in synagogues and council chambers, in homes and rented halls, in streets and market places, in jails, on country roads, and on ships at

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<sup>21</sup> See I Corinthians 1:21 — American Standard Version, (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1929)

sea. Not only men like Peter, John, Stephen, Phillip, Paul, and Apollos; but quiet souls like Barnabas, Aquila, and Priscilla. In addition, there were those nameless thousands of the New Testament that "went everywhere preaching the word." They preached as readily to one as to a thousand, to the slave as well as the master. I cannot imagine the men of God, the true men of God, passing a single day without talking with at least one person about his soul's salvation. You and I are God's people. Let us pray for the zeal of Paul, the fullness of Stephen, the love of John, and the humility of Luke.

We are God's people. The hope of heaven hangs on us; the Great Commission is personally ours. We have a charge to keep, a God to glorify, a Christ to proclaim. Let us all rise up as one and go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature.

"And, also, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' Then said I, 'Here am I, send me.'"

## THE NEW COMMANDMENT

JOE R. BARNETT

Born March 11, 1933, San Angelo, Texas  
Graduate of Midland High School, Midland, Texas 1951  
Graduate of Abilene Christian College—B.S. Degree—1955  
Listed in *Who's Who In American Colleges and Universities* in 1955.

Has worked with four congregations:

Anton Church of Christ  
Anton, Texas—1956-1958

Cactus Drive Church of Christ  
Levelland, Texas—1958-1964

Central Church of Christ  
Amarillo, Texas—1964-1968

Broadway Church of Christ  
Lubbock, Texas—1968-

Barnett was one of Governor Price Daniel's Texas delegates to the



White House Conference on Children and Youth in Washington, D.C. in 1960. Listed in latest release of *Who's Who In Texas*.

Member of Board of Trustees of Lubbock Christian College. Member of Steering Committee for Abilene Christian College's Mission Department. Staff writer for *Power for Today*, *Twentieth Century Christian* and *Action*. Member of Lubbock Rotary Club.

Has published a series of film-strips for teenagers dealing with moral problems. Along with the film study is a recorded narration by Bob Holton of Fidelity Films, Inc. of Abilene, Texas. Barnett also

authored four tracts in conjunction with the series. Has co-authored two books with John D. Gipson, minister of Sixth & Izard Church of Christ in Little Rock. The books, *Happiness... Day and Night* and *Paths to Peace*, are devotional books on Psalms and Proverbs, published by Pathway Publishing House. The *Central Herald*, church bulletin edited by Barnett, was selected as "bulletin of the year" in 1967 by *Twentieth Century Christian*.

Has delivered theme speeches on lectureship programs at Lubbock Christian College, Oklahoma Christian College, Pepperdine College, Harding College, Fort Worth Christian College, York Christian College, Michigan Christian College and Columbia Christian College.

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The hallway of my parents' home is their private picture gallery. Pictures of my sister and me virtually cover the wall. Just a glance surveys our growth from infancy to adulthood. I have stood in that hallway and wondered if similar growth would be charted if photographic memorials of our spiritual lives were possible. Would a spiritual pictorial survey of *your* life indicate substantial progress toward "mature manhood"<sup>1</sup> ... or would you yet be pictured in the baby crib?<sup>2</sup>

Now, expand this analogy to include the whole church. Paul spoke of Christ's intention that "... we *all* attain... mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."<sup>3</sup> He insisted that we "no longer be children,"<sup>4</sup> then added:

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1 Ephesians 4:13

2 I Corinthians 3:1

3 Ephesians 4:13

4 Ephesians 4:14

"Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love."<sup>5</sup>

Paul claims that love is the essential vitamin of spiritual maturity. *Intellectually* we have accepted *this* principle. But *practically* we have ignored it. We have not failed in *teaching* it, but in *possessing* it. Our stance has been much like that of the schoolmaster who was conducting a course in "Religious Knowledge."

"What did Jesus come into the world for?" he asked.

No answer.

"What did he come for?" shouted the exasperated man.

Still no answer.

"Love!" he roared at them, striding around the classroom, hitting each child over the head. "Love, love, love!"<sup>6</sup>

One of the guiding principles of our Restoration heritage is, "In matters of faith, unity." Our fellowship has justifiably emphasized that essential. But another guideline of the movement is, "*In all things, charity.*" And the most casual student is aware of our sad neglect at this point. Eternal history will clearly reveal that the majority of our problems,

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<sup>5</sup> Ephesians 4:15, 16

<sup>6</sup> Verney, *Five In Coventry*



both of *external conquest* and *internal conflict*, would have been avoided had we been controlled by love.

### LOVE IS THE ANSWER

The lesson at hand is an important one. All commands are summed up in the one rule of love.<sup>7</sup> That offers no license to ignore or violate any commandment, for as Paul says, "...*love is the answer* to the law's commands."<sup>8</sup> And there you have it... *LOVE IS THE ANSWER!*

When Jesus came to earth there were 613 commandments in the Torah. One day a lawyer, Judaism's typical figure, tested Jesus with an inquiry regarding the greatest commandment, Judaism's typical question. "Teacher," he probed, "which is the greatest commandment in the law?"<sup>9</sup> That question must have perplexed every man who took these rules seriously. Out of these 613 commandments, which is the *most* important?

The *scribes* would say that the law of the Sabbath, or the law of circumcision, was the most important. The *priests* would insist that worship through the temple rituals and assigned holy days was the most important. The *Pharisees* would argue that separation from everything that was not distinctly Jewish was the greatest demand of the law. Jesus didn't hesitate.

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7 Romans 13:9

8 Romans 13:10, Phillips

9 Matthew 22:36

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.”<sup>10</sup>

Jesus not only pointed to the *greatest* commandment, but also to the *second greatest*. Then, He even went a further step and employed a well-known Jewish expression about suspension: “On these two commandments depend (hangs) all the law and the prophets.” Edersheim says this means that all other commands sprang from these two as their root and principle, and stood in living connection with them. Jesus was not relegating the demands of the *scribes*, *priests*, and *Pharisees* to a position of unimportance. He, too, valued *obedience*, *worship*, and *holiness*. But, He knew inner motive determined real value, so He subordinated all else to the supreme obligation to love God with undivided personality and to love one’s neighbor as himself.

### AND NOW, A NEW COMMANDMENT

As Jesus neared the end of His life He faced the ticklish task of preparing His disciples for His departure. The need they would have for mutual loyalty and understanding brought into sharp focus the urgency of love for each other. So, as He soberly sat with those disciples in that never-to-be-forgotten room on that never-to-be-forgotten night, He said to them:

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<sup>10</sup> Matthew 22:37-40

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."<sup>11</sup>

Obviously fearful of both their forgetfulness and frailty, He twice repeated it: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."<sup>12</sup> "This I command you, to love one another."<sup>13</sup> The impression is immeasurably deepened as Jesus seals that Gethsemane prayer with the words:

"O righteous Father, the world has not known thee, but I have known thee; and these know that thou hast sent me. I made known to them thy name, and I will make it known, *that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.*"<sup>14</sup>

### HOW IS IT NEW?

But, how could this commandment be considered "new"? Jesus had been explicit with that questioning lawyer, telling him plainly that love captured both first and second places in importance. How could He then give love as a "new commandment"?

### NEW IN OBJECT

First, it was new in *object*. Jesus had previously pointed

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11 John 13:34, 35

12 John 15:12

13 John 15:17

14 John 17:26

to the necessity of loving *God*.<sup>15</sup> He had insisted upon the importance of loving one's *neighbor*.<sup>16</sup> He had even gone beyond the demands of the law and demanded love for *enemies*.<sup>17</sup> But He was now saying, "love *one another*." This would tax their spiritual strength. Indeed, and ours!

He was not setting aside the "old" commandment of love for neighbor. Willingness to live up to the demands of that command would solve many of the world's perplexing problems. War, race relations, poverty—these problems would come to quick solution if only we would love our neighbors. But Jesus knew that some of tender social conscience, who would beautifully answer this command, would have immeasurable difficulty with the more demanding "new" commandment.

Look again at the circumstances surrounding the initiation of this important command. Jesus was about to die. His disciples were full of resentment toward each other; quarreling about positions of greatness and honor. Christ knew these problems would alienate them from one another unless some powerful, cohesive force was found. Knowing their *one common admiration* was centered in Himself, and that they would try desperately to please Him, He said, "I command you to love one another."

Today, in the body of Christ, we have our differences, too. We are widely separated in intellectual interest and

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15 Matthew 22:37

16 Matthew 22:39

17 Matthew 5:44

achievement, in spiritual stature, and in our emphases on matters which seem to us supremely important. But we do have a common loyalty to Christ. So let us listen carefully to His cementing command: "Love one another."

Love, in the close contact of brotherhood, requires great effort. Proximity magnifies faults. It isn't difficult to "intellectually" love someone with whom you never have contact. But the person who opposes you in a "business meeting"—that's different. As someone confessed, "It's no chore for me to love the brotherhood; my problem is loving the brethren."

Loving the brethren . . . there's the real test. It's easier to be magnanimous toward a disagreeable non-Christian (we even get a spiritual kick out of our forbearance) than it is to show the same tolerance toward another Christian with whom we have a conflicting view. We mutter indignantly, "What kind of Christianity is that? What a spiritual pigmy." And beneath our righteous indignation lurks the self-congratulatory thought, "Thank God, I'm not like that."<sup>18</sup>

Our practice of labeling brethren is lamentable. How neatly we package and dispense with brothers:

*"Worldly man . . . his possessions prove he is materialistic."  
"Nominal Christian . . . his vocabulary gives him away (he doesn't use the same clichés I use)."  
"Intellectual liberal . . . he discusses Tillich, Bultmann and Sartre (obviously a dangerous thinker)."  
"Uneducated legalist . . . he has no spiritual depth and uses the King James version."*

There is little chance of loving one another until we begin searching for the good qualities in each other. It is no coincidence that Paul, in the closing paragraphs of Philippians, pinpointed this emphasis. He begged two women, Euodia and Syntyche, to settle their differences. Then, one paragraph later he said:

“Here is a last piece of advice. If you believe in goodness and if you value the approval of God, fix your minds on whatever is true and honorable and just and pure and lovely and praiseworthy.”<sup>19</sup>

Our love for each other tells a great deal about us. God did not love us because we were worthy of His love.<sup>20</sup> He did not love us because we were free, white, black, American, intellectuals, common people, etc. For no reason within ourselves, but for every reason within Himself, He loves us. His love tells us considerably more about *Him* than it does about *us*. Likewise, the love you show others says more about *you* than it does about *them*. Your failure to love brethren advertises your weakness, not their unworthiness.

Unfortunately, there are those in our fellowship who are guilty of prejudices; who have great difficulty expressing love for those whom they consider in a lower class. Equally unfortunate is the condition of the brother who, while having conquered these problems, nevertheless has trouble loving brethren whom he considers to be in a lower spiritual class, because they have failed to develop his social

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19 Philippians 4:8, Phillips

20 Romans 5:8

sensitivity. The *object* of this "new commandment" is the brotherhood.

### NEW IN MEASURE

The command was also new in *measure*. Under the law the measure of love required toward one's neighbor was "*as yourself*." But, the new commandment demanded a higher measure: "love one another . . . *as I have loved you*." Let's notice three qualities of Christ's love for them. It was *limitless*, *patient*, and *forgiving*.

*His Love was LIMITLESS.* This quality is best seen by viewing His earthly life at its *beginning* and its *end*. His *birth* was the result of His love:

" . . . though he was in the form of God, [He] did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."<sup>21</sup>

His *death* was the climax of that love:

"And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross."<sup>22</sup>

His love was so complete that even the distasteful demand of an earthly sojourn was not considered too much. And,

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<sup>21</sup> Philippians 2:6, 7

<sup>22</sup> Philippians 2:8

when love demanded the cross He was prepared to bear it. The disciples are urged to answer demands of that same limitless love for one another:

"Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus."<sup>23</sup>

*His love was PATIENT*— Jesus knew these disciples through and through. He knew all their weaknesses, yet He loved them. He loved them when they were worthy of His love; He loved them when they were not so worthy. When they strayed, stumbled, and fell, He stooped in love, picked them up and set them back in the way. The "new commandment" demands no less of us:

"Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness . . . Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."<sup>24</sup>

Those who really love us are the people who know us at our worst, and still love us. When we see a person only occasionally we always see him at his best. But when we are closely associated with people we discover their moods, irritabilities, and weaknesses. Real love takes a brother not only for better, but also for worse.

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<sup>23</sup> Philippians 2:3-5

<sup>24</sup> Galatians 6:1, 2



Perhaps our love is most lacking in this quality of patience. The indictment is especially true of preachers. The most telling sign of our impatience is the moving van. How quickly our flame of zeal is quenched when we discover that members and leaders in what we had hoped to be our "promised land" have the same weaknesses as those we left behind in a previous congregation. If our dreams fall short of immediate fulfillment we impatiently launch our search for a new field where brethren at least "want to go forward."

Similarly, some have severed their brotherhood ties because they despaired of brotherhood "littleness." Some ministers have marked the church off as outmoded, irrelevant, and meaningless in today's world...so they have quit. What these abdicating preachers want is an ideal church, "perfectly fulfilling every mandate of Jesus, with the Holy Spirit hovering constantly." That dream church will forever be "out there" in some utopian future. These impatient ministers have adopted the hippie assumption that you make the relevant scene by dropping out. This spiritual hippiedom offers the easy way out—reject and forget. The greater challenge is to stay aboard and work *with* Establishment people, helping them to see true value through the facade of materialism.

No amount of excuse-making can vindicate the church which, in this affluent age, is so devoid of love as to ignore poverty and prejudice. But neither is there any excuse for the brother who permits his impatience to prompt an unloving attack of that church. I cannot understand preachers who have nothing good to say about the church; who see nothing but her faults. I cannot understand preachers who

have nothing good to say about elders who devote so much of themselves to serving. These fellows who are sharp and critical of the church but who continue to accept the paycheck from those "unprincipled" folk operate under distorted ethics.

We have reason to be concerned with the super-spiritual, look-down-the-nose attitude of some brethren as they view those who "don't have the truth." We have equal reason for concern for those super-spiritual boys who look down with similar contempt on brethren who "just don't understand the deep things of the spirit." The attitude is nauseating. It has the sickly sweetness of cotton candy, and is just as insubstantial. Some brethren view the brotherhood with the same disdain as the woman who came downstairs one morning and announced to the family, "I've prayed God for grace to stand you all for another day." Needless to say, there was little evidence that her prayers, uttered in that spirit, had been answered. These men provide the paradoxical picture of being unloving of the unloving, intolerant of the intolerant, impatient with the impatient.

We would all do well to check our lives for the fruit of the Spirit.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."<sup>25</sup>

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25 Galatians 5:22

I'm tempted to believe that if punctuation marks had been in use, Paul would have put a colon after the first basic and all-inclusive fruit of love. All the others would then be the characteristics of love, its expressions . . . including *patience*.

*His love was FORGIVING.* Peter would deny Him. All of them would forsake Him in His hour of need. They were blind, insensitive, slow to learn, cowardly. But there was no failure which He could not forgive. The love which has not learned to forgive is really no love at all.

Jesus used an extreme example to make His point on this matter. He talked of a man who demanded payment of a scanty sum when he himself had just been pardoned of an enormous debt.<sup>26</sup> Our debt to God is terribly large. In comparison, our grievances against each other are ridiculously small. Why do we have such a hard time forgiving? Memory has a way of opening the registry of the past. The evil that others have done us is written in bold ink. But love erases those wrongs with the same blood that blotted out our sins. What Christ's love has done for us, we should surely permit His love in us to do for others.

When one strikes at us the tendency is to strike back. But remember what Peter said of the most amazing man he had ever known: "When he was reviled, he did not revile in return."<sup>27</sup> Refuse to fight with your brother when nothing is to be gained but his defeat. He may be defenseless. You may be able to answer every argument. But you don't need to be decorated at his expense. Yet, for some reason

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<sup>26</sup> Matthew 18:23-35

<sup>27</sup> I Peter 2:23

we are inclined to snap back. How true that the *narrow mind* and the *wide mouth* often go together. This tendency toward revenge and retaliation runs deep in nations and men. Any affront, real or imagined, triggers a violent response. The whole course of history, including ecclesiastical history, discloses man's penchant for vengeance.

Christ's method of dealing with evil should be our method also. Simply stated, Christ absorbed all that the powers of evil could offer, and neutralized it with forgiving love. Such should be our pattern:

"Repay no one evil for evil... never avenge yourselves... Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."<sup>28</sup>

Evil propagates itself by chain-reaction. It's like a bad coin which is passed on from one person to another until it reaches someone who will put it out of circulation by absorbing the loss. If one man injures another, there are three ways in which evil can win a victory, and only one way in which it can be defeated. If the injured person retaliates, nurses a grievance, or takes it out on a third party, the evil is perpetuated, and is therefore victorious. Evil is defeated only if the injured person absorbs the evil and refuses to allow it to go any further.

### NEW IN PURPOSE

Also, the command was new in *purpose*. That love was

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<sup>28</sup> Romans 12:17, 19, 21

intended to be the cement to hold these disciples together in the difficult days ahead no one can doubt after carefully reading the context. But another stated purpose for following the new commandment was: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples." Previous to this time discipleship had been recognized by various symbols. The *Jew* was recognized by his dress and language, his reverence for Moses, his selection of meats and drinks, and his antipathy to all the races of the uncircumcision. The *uniform* and *language* would cause one to recognize immediately if a man were a *Pharisee* or a *Sadducee*. Now, from henceforth, our Lord insists that His followers are to be known, not by dress, language, or occupation, but by the obvious love they have for each other.

The men to whom Christ gave this command would be infallible in their teaching. Guided by the Holy Spirit, they would not be subject to error. Yet, Christ realized that even infallible men, if they lacked love, would never be able to convince the world that they were His disciples. If infallible men needed love to insure unity, how much more do we who are fallible need it. Furthermore, infallibility did not do away with all matters of judgment. For instance, the dispute between Barnabas and Paul regarding John Mark was a matter of judgment.<sup>29</sup> Thus, even the apostles needed love to hold them together in such matters.

Since the dawn of the Restoration Movement we have been trying to get the world to recognize us as God's people. We have reminded them that, "We speak where the

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29 Acts 15:37-40

Bible speaks, and we are silent where the Bible is silent." This is a good slogan, and true to the Scriptures. But slogans carry very little convicting weight. . . people are convinced by what they *see* more than by what they *hear*. No amount of pious prattle nor tracts handed out, nor earnest little homilies delivered to skeptical friends will convince them of the truth of the gospel unless they see it in our lives. However loving we may feel toward God, if there is no evidence of love toward each other no one will believe we are His disciples. They can't *see* our love for God. But they can see how we behave toward each other. And by our behavior they judge the depth of our discipleship. John stated it this way:

"By this it may *be seen* who are the children of God, and who are the the children of the devil: whoever does not do right is not of God, *nor he who does not love his brother.*"<sup>30</sup>

An admiral heard that two of his officers had engaged in a quarrel. Bringing them together he pointed them to the enemy and said, "Look there. Then shake hands and be friends." The divisive forces existing in our own nation at present represent weakness to the enemy. Hanoi applauds the moratoriums because she knows division saps national strength. The point should be applied. How often we have seen the sorry sight of Christian disputing against Christian. There is no place for divisive differences among soldiers of the King.

We must learn to exercise a spirit of Christian love, even

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<sup>30</sup> I John 3:10

when experiencing differences. It is cause for no small sorrow that we divide into competitive camps, hurling labels at each other rather than working together. There is need for us to apply the "new commandment," and with it the prayer of Jesus: "that they may all be one... that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."<sup>31</sup> Existing differences do not excuse acts of personal hatred. It is a detestable disposition which causes us to thrust a man into a category just because he makes one statement with which we disagree. There is such a thing as an honest difference of opinion between Christian gentlemen. It is frightening to think that the very Christ we seek to exalt may be hidden from the view of many because of an un-Christlike spirit in us. Brother Joe Cannon, 20 years a missionary in Japan, writes:

"Many scars remain in the body of Christ, where the contrary missionary took his stand and turned his sword against his brothers... only when love for one another is learned can the multitude of sins be covered and the wounds healed."

Chrysostom commented upon this "new commandment":

"Miracles do not so much attract the heathen as the mode of life. And nothing so much causes a right life as love. And with good reason. When one of them sees the greedy man, the plunderer, exhorting others to do the contrary; when he sees the man who was commanded to love even his enemies treating his very kindred like brutes, he will

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31 John 17:21

say that the words are folly. We are the cause of their remaining in error. Their own doctrines they have long condemned, and in like manner they admire ours, but they are hindered by our mode of life.”<sup>32</sup>

He goes on to say that it is vain to point out to the disgusted heathen the virtues of famous Christians of *former times*. They are skeptical about them he insists, so long as the Christians whom they see and know are scandalously unworthy of their profession.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, Jesus made brotherly love a mark of discipleship . . . and *identifying mark* of the church. But when have you heard a sermon on “The Identifying Marks of the Church” which included love for each other as one of those identifying marks? We do not question that the *name* on your church building is an identifying mark; nor that the *items of worship* are identifying marks. But, no more than brotherly love: “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” By what power could He have made it plainer?

The concept of love is central to Christianity. Jesus soberly declared this to His disciples. With one voice the New Testament writers reiterate His insistence that love is the heart of all religion.

*John* repeatedly asserts that only in love is a man’s profession of Christianity verified:

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32 H. H. Henson, *Godly Union and Concord*, p. 162.

33 *Ibid.*



"He who loves his brother abides in the light... But he who hates his brother is in the darkness..."<sup>34</sup>

"By this it may be seen who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not do right is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother."<sup>35</sup>

"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God; for God is love... Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another... if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us."<sup>36</sup>

"We love, because he first loved us. If any one says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also."<sup>37</sup>

The letter to the church at Ephesus implies the same. That church had labored manfully, endured much, kept her faith undistorted and her life pure. She proved herself energetic, faithful, orthodox, and clean. Yet, she is told that none of this would save her if she failed to recapture her earlier love. Without love her candlestick would be removed; her light would go out.<sup>38</sup>

34 I John 2:10, 11

35 I John 3:10

36 I John 4:7-12

37 I John 4:19-21

38 Revelation 2:2-5

*Paul* writes the most penetrating points on love. "Owe no one anything," he shouts, "except to love one another."<sup>39</sup> When Paul wrote to divided, immature, quarrelsome Christians at Corinth, he deliberately passed in brief, almost contemptuous, review the various elements of religious life which some of them regarded as all-important. Some prized supremely the emotional ecstasy which found outlet in rapturous utterance... "the tongues of men and of angels." Others valued most the intellectual grasp of religious knowledge... the understanding of "all mysteries and all knowledge." Still others demanded of religion a practical dynamic of reform... the possession of "all faith, so as to remove mountains." Some thought philanthropy and the spirit of social service was the heart of Christianity... "I give away all I have." And a few brave people counted readiness for martyrdom the crown of Christian discipleship... "I deliver my body to be burned."<sup>40</sup>

True love will partake in some degree of all these emotional, intellectual, faithful, generous, and heroic qualities. But each of these may spring from unworthy motives. And each may be sadly devoid of the spirit of love and so, as Paul says, "profit nothing." Paul views the possibility of a life filled with all of these virtues. Then he asks us to suppose one thing missing... love. And without love the tongues are meaningless, the knowledge empty, the faith impotent, the sacrifice worthless. When any of these is made the touchstone of the Christian life we have lost touch with Jesus and His demand for love as the essential hallmark of

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39 Romans 13:8

40 I Corinthians 13

true religion. It seems strange that those of us who plead for a restoration of the Christian economy often exhibit behavior and attitudes completely antithetic to love.

### OUR FRATRICIDAL FELLOWSHIP

Tertullian, in a famous passage of his "Apology," describes the impression made of the heathen by the mutual love of believers. They could not understand it:

"'See,' say they, 'how they love each other,' for they themselves hate each other. 'And see how ready they are to die for each other,' for they themselves are more ready to slay each other."<sup>41</sup>

To read our history of practicing division while preaching unity... to read the charges and counter-charges... to uncover the ugly spirit which has frequently plagued us, would lead one to place us among the heathens in Tertullian's observation. Unfortunately, we have often been ready to slay each other.

When I speak for the pressing necessity of replacing our fratricidal leanings with love I am speaking in a very old tradition, so far as this program is concerned. Over 100 speeches have been delivered from the ACC Lectureship platform which have been designed to inspire duplication of the Christian life.<sup>42</sup>

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41 Henson, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

42 Banowsky, *The Mirror of a Movement*, p. 395

In 1927, Carl L. Etter delivered a lecture entitled, "Theory and Practice." He argued that soundness in preaching was hypocrisy unless complemented and perfected by soundness in practice.<sup>43</sup> In his 1943 lecture on "Loyalty to Christ's Principles of Living," Raymond Kelcy contended that there was no substitute for impeccable living and that the brotherhood was in need of some improvement in this area:

"The power of the Church as a witness in the world is often sapped by the un-Christlikeness of its members. This has caused much criticism of the church, and has kept many out of the church. As someone has said, 'Yes, a Christian is the world's Bible, and just now we are badly in need of a revised version.' The failure of members of the church to be loyal to Christ's principles of living has retarded her progress more than all other things combined."<sup>44</sup>

No speaker has approached this platform more disturbed about the lack of the spirit of Christ within our brotherhood than E. W. McMillan. Those present for the 1946 lectureship program will recall the graphic illustration he used to demonstrate the grave responsibility incumbent upon all self-appointed "defenders of the faith."

"Men who defend the church from these departures are much in the same position as a surgeon is beside his patient. One foul germ on his knife or from his breath could defeat all his skill... Just as the white muslin is of less

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43 "Theory versus Practice," Lectures, 1926-1927, pp. 130-131.

44 "Loyalty to Christ's Principles of Living," Lectures, 1943, p. 143.

value after passing through greasy hands, the sublime scheme of divine grace has less appeal when it comes forth upon the foul breath of a corrupt man in heart."<sup>45</sup>

In 1956, A. C. Dunkleberger discussed from this platform the topic, "Practice What You Preach." He said:

I am persuaded, brethren, that the sincerity of those in error — impressing by the devotion of their lives — has in a multitude of cases outweighed in influence the preaching of the truth, perfect in its linguistic presentation but drowned out by the noise of malpractice."<sup>46</sup>

Such un-Christian action is not only fratricide, but suicide as well. John tells us, "The man without love for his brother is living in death already."<sup>47</sup>

### *ACTION IS THE ANSWER*

"Thou shalt love!" How can we succeed in answering this command? The "*greatest* commandment" of Judaism and the "new commandment" of Jesus alike provide the paradox of love legally required. Can love be legislated? Certainly not, if love is merely an emotional impulse. Commanded love clearly has more of moral than emotional content.

John, the apostle of love, had much to say about the motivation of love. In his day the church was suffering ex-

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45 "The Kingdom That Cannot Be Shaken, II," Lectures, 1946, p. 124.

46 "Practice What You Preach," Lectures, 1957, p. 129.

47 1 John 3:14, Phillips.

treme persecution. Many apostles had already been put to death. The power of Rome had been focused against the church. Although the legions of Rome had destroyed the Alexandrian empire, a revival of Grecian influence was sweeping over Rome, having its effect on the intellectuals of the day. Grecian philosophy had a great deal to say about the motivation of love. The Greeks interpreted love as sensual, passionate, impulsive. They felt that this love (eros) was the motivating force that made man do what he did. John knew that this impulsive, passionate, often irresponsible action was not characteristic of the love of God. To offset this concept of love as taught by the Grecians, John used a relatively unknown word, *agape*, to describe the love of God and its motivating influence.<sup>48</sup> Through this word came the idea of deliberate self-sacrificing, self-choosing, self-disciplined love.

"The word *love* here does not mean personal liking — a sentimental affection — but active good will — the Greek *agape*. It is good will, boundless and aggressive, extended to those who may have no personal charm to us, and may be beyond the boundaries of family or tribe or nation."<sup>49</sup>

Thus, this love is not an emotion or sentiment, but an act of the will. It is not an involuntary response to conditions, but a deliberate choice. This is why it can be commanded.

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48 For a comprehensive study of the four Greek terms for love, the reader is referred to *The Four Loves*, C. S. Lewis, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York.

49 The Interpreter's Bible, Mark, p. 848.

Next, notice that this love is always *active*. It cannot be *passive*. This is seen in God's love:

"In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him."<sup>50</sup>

The greatest mistake is to reduce love to human terms; to *talk* love instead of *living* it. John shows the falsity of such a procedure:

"... if any one has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? ... let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth."<sup>51</sup>

Obviously, commanded love is active love. How do we keep the commandment to love one another? By keeping the commandments governing our *actions* toward one another. If we act toward our brother as if we love him genuine love will grow. We love those who help us. But we love even more those whom we help. There is something about living sacrificially for others that makes them very dear. No wonder Paul said, "... through love be servants of one another."<sup>52</sup> C. S. Lewis offered this worthy advice on the cultivation of love:

"Don't waste time bothering whether you love your neighbor. Act as if you did. As soon as we do this we find one

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50 I John 4:9

51 I John 3:17, 18

52 Galatians 5:13

of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved so neone you will presently come to love him.”<sup>53</sup>

A pointed example of this is found in the story of the good Samaritan.<sup>54</sup> The priest and the Levite hastened on their way rather than taking time to minister to a stranger. Contrariwise, a Samaritan, seeing the same stranger, was moved with compassion. He was compelled to bind the injured man's wounds and minister to his needs. It was through the motivation of *agape*. He had no emotional attachment to that man, but intelligent love told him to care for him.

The command to love one another was predicated on the assumption that disciples would *act* toward a brother in the ways commanded. And from such actions genuine love would grow.

It must also be noted that the ability to so love belongs only to those who are made partakers of the divine nature. There is nothing in human nature which can produce it. It is an attribute of the divine nature. It is the “fruit of the Spirit.”<sup>55</sup> It is distinctly declared to have been “poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.”<sup>56</sup> It is of more than passing interest that Judas was dismissed from that room before Jesus issued the “new commandment.”

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53 C. S. Lewis, *Christian Behavior*, p. 51.

54 Luke 10:29-37

55 Galatians 5:22

56 Romans 5:5



*AS LONG AS WE LIVE*

No man can overcome the world, except by *faith*.<sup>57</sup> And no man can resemble God except by *love*. If you had to enter the church building next Sunday morning where you worship clothed only in proportion to your love, how well would you be clothed?

While we are yet a long way from accomplishment in answering the new commandment, we must give much attention to it. When Madame Curie and her husband, Pierre, failed in their 487th experiment in search of radium, he was ready to give up in despair. "It can't be done!" he said. "Maybe in a hundred years, but not in our lifetime." She replied, "If it takes a hundred years it will be a pity, but I dare not do less than work for it as long as I live." Even so, the results of what we're seeking may be slow and the progress painstaking. Maybe not in a hundred years, or even a thousand, will we effect a breakthrough in love for the brethren. If it takes that long it will be a pity; but we dare not do less than diligently work for it as long as we live!

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<sup>57</sup> I John 5:4



# SPECIAL LECTURES



## THE RELEVANCE OF THE CHURCH

ANDREW J. HAIRSTON

*Born:* Clemons, N. C., graduated from Forsyth County Public School system, received Assoc. B.A. from Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas; received B.A. and B.S. from Paul Quinn college in Waco, Texas; received B.D. from Brite Seminary at T.C.U. and completed residence work on Master of Theology at Brite; Completed residence work on Master of Sociology at Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia; received Doctor of Jurisprudence from John Marshall University in Atlanta.

### *CHURCHES SERVED*

Student churches while attending Southwestern were Garland and Teague, Texas. Full-time churches were Waco and Fort Worth, Texas, and presently Simpson Street in Atlanta, Georgia, where he has been for 8 years.



He is married to the former Miss Jeanne Turner of Ft. Worth, Texas, and they have four children: Kenneth 11, Karen 9, Kerri 6, and Kolan one year.

### *MISSION*

Served as coordinator of the "GIVE GOD A CHANCE CAMPAIGN" conducted in Monrovia, Liberia, in June, 1969.

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I welcome this invitation from Dr. Brecheen, the entire administration and faculty to stand before this student body and all others who are gathered here. I bring greetings from the Lord's church which meets at Simpson Street in Atlanta. I am thankful God has touched the hearts of the concerned in such a way as to allow me to be called to minister in this all important hour.

Since I believe time is running out in many ways, I have fully committed myself to the task of stating in the best possible way, all I believe God wants me to say at this great crossroad in our lives.

Though I am convinced that in many ways and on various occasions, we have come short of being true to the call of being the church which I understand the Bible to present, I have a strong faith in our ability, with God's help, to be that church.

We will not satisfy God's requirements for the church, however, through the implements of human traditions, sympathy with feelings of nostalgia, companionship, politicking, keeping the status quo, and concentrating more on not "rocking the boat" than on accepting the well-structured boat built by Jesus which would allow us to remain afloat upon the most turbulent seas.

If the church is to be relevant, it must aim at being a people whom God has called out of the world who is striving to understand and relate with others who are yet caught in the crushing jaws of sin. This means that the church sees itself as sanctified or "set apart" to God, not merely for its own redemption, but for the salvation of all men. Rel-

evancy requires that the church be as fully dedicated to the eradication of sin and the establishment of righteousness as Jesus. Apparently, Jesus knew that he could not act redemptively for the world if he manifested an attitude of spiritual aloofness or separatism. In line with his mission "to seek and to save the lost," Jesus involved himself with people to such an extent that he was called a friend of sinners. As a matter of fact, Jesus was so well identified with the people of his day that he was characterized by some of his contemporaries as one who had come both eating and drinking, associating with sinners and politically ostracized figures, and a glutton and drunkard (Luke 7:34).

Relevancy for the present church is no more to be equated with the status quo, middle class ideas, rural concepts, or urbanized ideas than Jesus' determination to be a physician of the soul, was the same as an effort on his part to secure the approval of the political, religious, and economic structures of his day.

The church concerns itself with being relevant so that it might be truly redemptive. It desires to become all things to all men that it may be successful in gaining some (Romans 11:14; I Corinthians 9:22).

Karl Heim has said the church may be best described as a ship on whose deck festivities are still kept up and glorious music is heard, while deep below the water line a leak has been sprung and masses of water are pouring in, so that the vessel is settling hourly lower, though the pumps are manned day and night. If we are determined that this will not be the end of the Lord's church, we must be committed to meeting the contemporary issues as they

challenge the church. This we call relevancy. It is applying the biblical message to the problems of the modern day.

Relevancy recognizes that the church is a living organism and not a lifeless body. As an organism, it is internally structured so as to be able to adjust to the changing conditions of life without changing its basic structure.

The church must seriously consider the question of relevancy, since it has the responsibility of salvation to every generation. We must speak the message of redemption to every age. This approach recognizes that different conditions as to the spiritual, social, political, ethical, cultural, moral, and economic milieu may suggest a different emphasis or approach. The church must have a relevant message, because it must offer man a hope as he is faced with and is subjugated to the conditions and events of the "NOW" generation.

The fact that man is just as much involved in sin today as he was in the beginning does not excuse the church from its obligation of relevancy. As a matter of fact, one of the reasons we continue to proclaim God, Christ, the evils of sin, the need of repentance and forgiveness and the unity of the church is that they remain relevant to man and his needs. However, by the same token we recognize that it is useless to continue proclaiming the need of initial acceptance of Christ and baptism to baptized believers, since these offer no possible solution to their problems occurring after these commandments have been obeyed.

The Hebrew writer invites us to become relevant in our teaching when he says:



Let us leave behind the elementary teaching about Christ and go forward to adult understanding. Let us not lay over and over again the foundations of truth—repentance from the deeds which led to death, believing in God, baptism and laying of hands, belief in life to come and the final judgment. No, if God allows, let us go on (Hebrews 6:1-3 — Phillips).

Relevancy requires the contemporary church to see contemporary problems and share in the process of offering a workable solution. We must speak to the world and times in which we live. Simple canned orthodox answers are not always the solution to the problems produced by the complexities of our time. As we live in a complex age, we may be sure that there will be complex problems. For the church to assume or to act as though the fundamental facts of the gospel are, as isolated entities, the solution rather than the basis of the solution which must be given meaningful application, is infantile. The aim of the church is to give its membership a workable Christian principle for life, regardless of the circumstances. This means that we must seek ways of involving ourselves in the affairs of this world, as Jesus did, with the aim of bringing redemption. We must seek opportunities of redemption at grassroot levels. We must deal with and search for answers to the "NITTY GRITTY" problems per se.

But we ask, can the church be relevant and remain faithful to its true biblical identity? To ask this question is to also ask the question as to the true identity of the biblical church.

We have made an earlier effort to point out that being relevant is not synonymous with being accommodative. Relevancy is not to become a part of our surroundings; it

is to speak to the immediate conditions which affect the "NOW" generation both favorably and adversely. Rather than being accommodative to its surroundings or ignoring it and perhaps becoming unconsciously absorbed by it, the church seeks to become particularly aware of its environment and speaks meaningfully to it. Thus, to be relevant is to have a message which is current. There is no need whatever to discontinue the doctrine of baptism, one church under God, and the unity of the church in order to be relevant. Relevancy may suggest that what the hearer needs to hear is not the above, but how to relate meaningfully to his neighbor, how to attain self-forgiveness, or how to keep his wife first before the many women by whom he is being tempted. Can we not agree that the message of the good Samaritan would more nearly apply in cases of human hatred than a lesson on instrumental music. Or, we may ask what message can we give to people who manifest concern as to the morality of the Viet Nam War. The church cannot escape, evade, or avoid its responsibility to speak both meaningfully and responsibly to our people in our times. Thus, to be relevant is to be current in our messages and in our dealings with sin and righteousness. It is to speak to today and its problems in the light of God's word.

Therefore, the aim of the church to having a relevant message is the hope of allowing Christ to speak through his church to modern man in relation to his most pressing issues, problems, and times. Relativity concerning the church's message has no primary emphasis beyond the immediate time. The church simply tries to speak to contemporary man with the biblical message. The epistles were written to churches with the aim of dealing with problems

then troubling the church. A reading of the episode of the seven churches of Asia will introduce one to the catalogue of problems deterring the churches there.

It seems apparent that the existing church can only choose between having a relevant message and accepting a slow but certain death.

Not long ago, I talked with a youthful man who had given up his membership in his hometown church for reasons which he described as the irrelevancy of that church's message. He said his church had taught him all about Jesus on the cross, Paul's trip to Damascus, baptism, and other biblical facts. He enjoyed all this but after enrolling in the school of life and living for himself, he had the rude awakening that he had not been prepared for living at all. He said he was unable to get Jesus off the cross into his life and he could not, for some reason, know the Christ whom Paul had seemed to know. He said his church gave him these great truths, but they never really had any meaning for him. His church had left him unprepared for the life he was bound to live in the open world of conflict. It so happened that in his confrontation with sin, agnosticism, new morality, and strange theologies, he needed a living Lord and not merely a great historical figure. His church had prepared him for the world, it thought, simply by telling him some historical stories along with some orthodox arguments against sin and its vicious ways, and telling him that anything differing with that was wrong. It prepared him for a world of two colors, black and white, and two choices, right and wrong, without really teaching him how to distinguish and know the difference. He was not taught, and neither did he know, that there were grays and other

intermediate colors, until he began to live for himself. He had not even been prepared to converse with people who did not believe what he believed. He described his former church as still sitting there with its head in the clouds.

While talking with this young man, I did not discern in any way a loss of a belief in God, a true church, a living hope for man in meaningful relationship to his God; he clearly believed and openly stated that his church had, by holding its head in the clouds, prepared him to live in a hypothetical spiritual world rather than the real secular world in which conditions required that he live. His church had a historical message but not a relevant one. This young man had the rude awakening that rote consciousness of these historical data did not prepare him to resist the flaming darts of Satan. Though he did not become a part of evil as he knew it, he felt his church had prepared him to forfeit rather than win the victory, by failing to equip him with good warfare. He thought the message of his church may have been relevant had it spent its energies on teaching him the meaning of the cross and how he could have, through personal dedication, used Christ as the solution to his encounters as Paul and others had done in successfully meeting their enemies.

The aim of relevancy is to bless the church to become a living, active, and challenging instrument in God's hand. It is to admit our grave spiritual, social, economical, political, and human problems. It is an admission of the need for, and the beginning of, a meaningful search for the answers to the problems of today's world. It is a recognition that much of what has always existed yet remains, and it is a recognition that new dimensions have been added which

require adjusted answers. Relevancy brings the church into open conflict with the gates of hell. It prevents the church from becoming obscure to the real world that exists and denies it the right to live in a dream world where salvation depends on clear-cut questions and answers.

To be relevant is to be the true New Testament church. To refuse to be relevant is to refuse to be the New Testament church, since the church and its message has always been relevant. Such a refusal and commitment to inaction is an aim at becoming a mere historical relic or entity that deals with forms rather than life itself.

The church was by its nature relevant in the beginning. It did not merely preach about past good lives; it produced them. It was not enough for it to glory in the courage of Daniel, the three Hebrew children, and Christ. The spirit of Christ had so captured Stephen that he could, while accepting death at the hands of the enemies of truth, rather than modify his faith see Jesus clearly seated on the right hand of God and request that divine powers lay no charge against his executioners. Peter wanted what Jesus had so he could go to him on the sea of Galilee. Jesus was so relevant to Paul that he could not be persuaded against going to Jerusalem. He was motivated to live meaningfully in the face of every possible obstacle.

The church against which the gates of hell shall not prevail boldly met the problems of inter-congregational strife, hypocrisy, dishonesty, withdrawal, humanity, sacrifice, and circumcision. It boldly declared that the walls separating men were destroyed and that in Christ all are as one (Eph: 2:11-22; Galatians 3:28). The church met whatever became an issue and thereby secured the life of

the church. This church refused to think more of its own good name and reputation than of Christ and his message. But we risk failing to be truly New Testamental and relevant when we fail the test which the New Testament church passed with flying colors in Acts 5. Peter refused to bend the church to Ananias and Sapphira. Neither they nor their money could have any impact on changing or directing the course of the church. Does the existing church miss this mark by allowing itself and related institutions to be influenced by materialism?

In its effort to be relevant, however, the church must guard against the live potential of confusing relevancy with being temporal and forsaking or neglecting its primary mission. For, it is within the context of its primary mission that the church must be relevant in its message. Not only is there a chance that we will commit this sin at the beginning of our desire to be relevant, there is a good chance that we may get off the true course after we have begun. However, this possibility of error is no justification for our wilful neglect of our true mission, since to be overly careful or fearful is sinful (Revelation 21:8).

The church concerns itself with being relevant because such course will aid it in being redemptive and a failure to be relevant will render it void, a parasite on society, and a mere relic of history. The true church is committed to declaring the true relevance of Christ in terms of today's needs rather than outmoded forms of detached self-righteousness. The true church believes fully that Christ is the answer to today's needs and determines to speak relative to these needs.

Relevancy produces a living, challenging, in-depth min-

istry by the church. A failure to be relevant produces legalism and forces the church to concentrate on how it can best maintain and protect its legalism rather than how it can best meet man and his needs. The church has done irreparable self-harm by its absolute refusal to be converted to God and away from human traditions which forces it to practice human injustices and inequities.

No church committed to being submissive to the principles of racism is either relevant or true to its calling to be the church. No institution which has more regard for a public law that is divisive than it has for God's law condemning division can claim the right to be God's Church. An institution is neither relevant nor Christian when it works harder to preserve a human tradition or technicality than lighten the burdens of the suffering. Nor are its values in the right place when it clamors and shouts more about programs such as Aid for Dependent Children and Welfare payments than it does about the terrible expense of the war in Viet Nam. One is designed to give survival of life and the other is designed to destroy life. It is not Christian nor relevant for the church to debate whether it is feasible for it to follow the will of God in the face of human traditions.

Not long ago, I had a member of our fellowship to tell me that though he knew God's law concerning the brotherhood of man, he was justified in not following it in a segregated society. I wondered if he would have acted the same if there were a law against baptism, communion, or church attendance. Our brotherhood has often been neither relevant nor Christian at the point of the brotherhood of all believers and church unity.

Because a denominational church is neither relevant nor Christian in relation to God or man, we must strive earnestly to be a living fellowship that is not marred by divisiveness or that proclaims a message that fails to relate to man in his coming before God and his fellowman.

Relevancy, honesty, and integrity require that the church recognize and admit its wrongs and shortcomings. It sees and admits the extent to which it, by omission and commission, has contributed to the woeful condition of our world.

Not only must the church and its message be relevant; it must be consistently relevant. So long as the church attempts through its membership to be relevant on the whiskey elections and presidential elections, and attempts to justify itself in not speaking to issues of even greater magnitude, both it and its message will fall on deaf ears.

If you *continue* in my words, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free. John 8:31, 32

Man demands truth as answers to his problem rather than untruths. He has come to traditionally look to science for a satisfaction of his needs. But now the church must struggle for its rightful front-rank position, because science has uncovered moral problems that it cannot solve. The church must speak more than a message of silence to the problems of heart transplant, the inheritance of "bad" genes and their eradication. Some members are confused on problems relating to birth control. Here is an issue dealing with life itself which the church must look at and speak to. We are childish to think this or any other public prob-



lem is no problem to our membership. It appears that we sometimes feel that the total function of the church is to inform and remind the world, regardless of its condition, of the facts of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and the one church and nothing more. We seemingly believe that the church's message couched exclusively in certain terms and ideas will cure the world of sin. But the fight between man and sin goes on, even among those who have apparently accepted the basic tenets. Man is confronted with a need for a meaningful answer to the problems of poverty, starvation, race, war, peace, sex, birth control, population explosion, genetics, transplants, pollution, suicide, and many other problems which will not go away even when he prays. The fact is that man has voluminous problems which have not been solved by his cold acceptance of the "facts of the gospel."

The church cannot afford to continue to ignore these massive seas of frustrations and problems troubling man. Relevancy here will begin with a recognition of the problem.

Dr. Robert H. Williams, in a fifteen page article entitled "*Our Role in the Generation, Modification and Termination of Life*," published in Volume 124 of *Archives of Internal Medicine*, August, 1969, states:

Problems concerning the total size and quality of the population are mounting rapidly, and the introduction of many drugs, life-sustaining apparatus, and organ replacements provoke various moral, philosophic, psychological, social, economic, medical and legal questions. These factors are considered with particular reference to genetic bioengineering, antifertility measures, contribution of amnio-

centesis, liberalization of abortion policies, organ transplantation, gerontology, suicide, euthanasia and measures for rapid and efficient utilization of cadaver organs and tissues.

On dealing with these major issues, the physician is presented with questions concerning the amount and type of life that should be generated, the extent to which life should be modified, and the extent of efforts in prolonging or terminating life.

Dr. Williams discusses the restrictions of population increase and the number of persons born with abnormalities. He points out that despite our over-abundance of food, starvation is the world's number one problem. Food production is not keeping pace with the increasing population. "Approximately 3,500,000 will starve this year, mostly children. The longer we wait the bigger our problem becomes."

The doctor says, "Progress will be aided tremendously when certain *religious groups* make changes in policies to confront realistically these present and future problems." He feels that man is more concerned with death control than he is with population control, without recognizing that one intensifies the other.

There is a chance that we will develop and perfect an abortifacient pill, as we have developed the antifertility one.

Already we have tasted success in the area of transplantation of vital organs such as the kidney and heart. Dr. R. J. White has succeeded in transplanting brains in dogs that continued active for three days.

Though we do not have the answers to our mounting problems that will not justify our resignation and withdrawal, we must try, though often with a faint sound, to speak to our world and times in terms of its needs.

We will not escape our responsibility by ignoring these problems. Starvation, abortion, antifertility, transplantation, euthanasia, and many other problems dig at and try our very nerve centers. In China alone, one point five million will die of starvation this year. The population explosion in the small country of Costa Rica is moving toward its predicted confrontation with destiny because of overpopulation. It is forecasted that the population of this country will exceed its own ability to provide food in fifteen years. Again, we may not know the answer, but can we afford not to do all we can to help find the answer?

The world is looking for an answer and it is not waiting for the non-participants to decide to join before it begins its diligent search. In the article referred to, one reads such statements as: "The Bible does not set forth any condemnation of suicide, but some Christian churches deny all suicides a religious burial," "we accommodate 'negative euthanasia' but reject the idea of 'positive euthanasia'"; and "The opposition to positive euthanasia is derived chiefly from existing laws, policies of certain religious groups, and philosophies of segments of the society. The largest portion of the opposition comes from interpretation of certain statements in the Bible, especially 'Thou shalt not Kill.' However, there is a statement in Ecclesiastes 3:2, 3 which says there is '... a time to kill and a time to heal.'"

We must raise our voices in relation to these matters

because our most sacred book is being discussed and given interpretations which are being attacked as enemies to the good of man. Man needs the leadership of the church in these matters and the church cannot give that help and direction pursuing the course of noninvolvement.

Let us be sure that a living and relevant church with a powerful and meaningful message can give meaning and purpose to lives. To make life worth living is the greatest challenge the church has in addition to preparing man to live with God and man.

If we can succeed in giving contemporary meaning to the sound and lasting all-sufficient facts of the gospel, we will not only pump new life into the existing church; we will cause a change in our times.

Yes, the church must choose between relevancy and death. There is no middleground. Admittedly, there are inherent dangers in being relevant but there are more in being dead. The journey we must take to be the people of God cannot be avoided on the ground that a challenging risk is involved. The Lord we serve has allowed us to be a part of a fellowship and abody which is so structured to be able to successfully resist the gates of hell (Matthew 16:18).

# THE COMMUNICATION GAP

ROY OSBORNE

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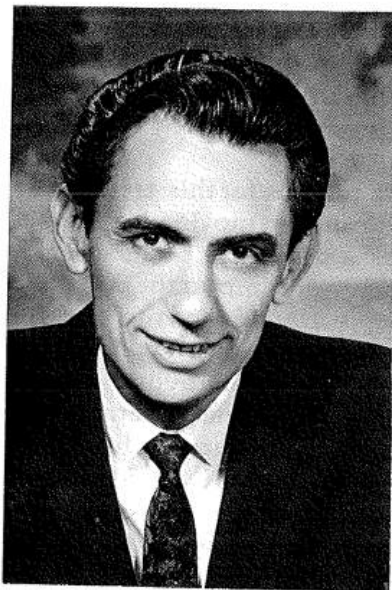
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Counselor, Lecturer, Author.

*Other fields of special studies:*

Communication (including General Semantics).

Delinquency (which includes six years as teacher-counselor at San Quentin Prison).



## *Organizations:*

Board of Directors: MIS-  
SION magazine

Board of Directors: East Bay  
Association for Retarded  
Children. (EBARC)

Editorial Staff: Christian Fam-  
ily Book Club.

Editorial Staff: POWER FOR  
TODAY magazine.

Member: Speakers Bureau,  
San Leandro Chamber of  
Commerce.

Member: International Society  
for General Semantics.

Member: Parachute Club of  
America.

Member: Aircraft Owners and  
Pilots Association. (In-  
strument rated commer-  
cial pilot.)

Member: Northern California Golf League.

*Book:* "From the Mountain to the Cross" (Biblical Research Press)

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The most meaningful part of our lives is in the area of our relations with other people. The man who lives for himself and within himself lives a meaningless and miserable life. For this reason, if for no other, a breakdown in communications is a major disaster.

A recent survey, conducted at the University of California, indicated a number of interesting things. It was found that people form fewer friendships today than they did thirty years ago; that these friendships last a shorter length of time; and that people share less important things with their friends than they did in times past. All of this seems to indicate that people are becoming more isolated every day.

We might note some of the reasons for this trend. The fact that more and more Americans are moving from rural to urban communities makes a difference. The farmer needed his neighbors and they were important people to him. He didn't have many people around, and the ones he did have were welcomed with warmth and genuine concern. Today, however, when we compete with hundreds of people each day for space on the freeways and in the supermarkets, people become a threat to us. We are surrounded by so many that we search for some place of privacy and some way to escape the crowd. Instead of needing people and welcoming them, we feel crowded by them and come to feel they are a threat to our peace and security.

Add to this the rising crime rate and the general lack of integrity we find in high places of government and in the market place, and it is not surprising that more and more people distrust their fellow man. This affects even our closest relationships, and we are unwilling to share really important things in our lives with others because of the general atmosphere of distrust in which we live. All of these things widen the communication gap in all relationships.

A gap is a space between two things which otherwise would be joined. This describes graphically the problem with which we have to do today. Instead of being joined in understanding, we have many segments in our society which are divided. This includes races (especially black and white), generations, political ideologies, nations, religious groups and people within religious groups. To close this gap is our desire, but defining the goal (i.e., just what we are trying to do in closing the gap) is as difficult as finding the method for doing it. Like so many things with which we deal today, too many people rush in with solutions before they know what the problems are. Someone has wisely said, "We have an abundance of simple solutions, but unfortunately we have a shortage of simple problems."

Perhaps the worst contributors to the problems are those who refuse to admit that a problem exists. Their solution is simple. Everyone should come and agree with them and that would settle all difficulties. Inasmuch as they have the truth and any *honest* person can see this, they feel the solution is obvious. The older generation says this when it falls back on age and experience as the master teachers and assumes that youth is, per se, wild and foolish. What they fail to see is (1) their generation has failed in many things and (2) there is information which education can give that

experience can actually hinder, especially if it causes a person to be satisfied or to be set in his ways and insensitive to change.

The younger generation indicates that *it* thinks the problem is as simple as having everyone agree with *it*. It aims its rhetoric at destroying the establishment, as if it had no redeeming features. In disdaining anyone over thirty, the youths of today commit the same errors that their adult counterparts commit: They fail to listen because they already have made up their minds about the other generation.

When a white man refuses to admit that a problem exists, he is considering himself superior and deems his words and his ways to be the only solution. Everyone must agree with him and then all will be well.

When a black man refuses to admit that there is a problem of communication, he simply says all white men are the same and cannot understand him because they have never been black and have never lived in poverty and rejection. To him, therefore, the solution is a simple one: Let the black man take over and dictate all policy, for only he can bring equity and justice as it should be. Again the offering of a simple solution: "Agree with me — I have the truth — and all will be well."

In religious circles, the problem is no less graphic. Many of our own number pretend to themselves and others that there is no problem — or at least that the problem is not a communication problem. In their book, the problem is one of honesty. Those who do not agree that *they* have the truth



are not honest, and if these people would just be honest there would be no problem.

Conversely, there are those who have written off *any* principle or method which has been used in the past and handed down to the present. Such people also refuse to admit the real problem and offer the simple solution: "Listen to us; throw out all semblance of the past; disdain all authority — and the problem is solved." "We can only communicate when we have nothing to communicate about," seems to be the credo of this group.

Is it possible for some of us to admit that great changes need to be made in our society, in the school and in the church? Is it equally possible for some others to admit that much of the existing establishment is worthy to be preserved? If you say "No" to either of these questions, you are contributing to the problem rather than to the solution.

In the first place, let me suggest that it is improper to attach the term "generation gap" to the concept "communication gap." Communication gap is not a gap between generations of people — that is, the old generation and the young generation. It is not a gap between the races, as the black and the white. It is not a gap between political ideologies, as between communism and capitalism. It is not a gap between masses of people — ever. When we speak of communication, no matter how many people are involved, we are talking about that which takes place between only two people at a time. If we recognize that the communication gap is a gap between two *individuals*, rather than between one *group* of individuals and another, then we might make some progress.

When I stand before an audience of people, it does not matter its size, the reaction to what I have to say is not a mass reaction, but is the reaction of individuals in the mass. Now it is quite true that their being in the mass may change their emotional reaction to what is said, and therefore tend to make them accept or reject more readily the things that are being said. But they still must react individually. I cannot be understood by a mass of people; I must be understood by *individual* people.

It is possible in this audience today for ninety percent of you, individually, to understand what I am saying. But this does not guarantee that the mass, as a whole, understands what I am saying. If ten percent do not understand, then this is a breakdown in communication between me and each individual in this ten percent.

I would hope that young people and old people alike may soon come to realize that they do not have to be boxed into the problem of communication within their generation or the mass with which they identify. Breakdown in communication between generations is still a breakdown between individuals of one generation and individuals of another.

The same thing, of course, can be said of races. We, unfortunately, identify with one race, and we have a tendency to react as we think that race is supposed to react. We fear and distrust those of a different race. We don't recognize that with each new individual we are faced with a new problem of communication. I must stand or fall, succeed or fail, not on the basis of what happens between the white race and the black race—but on the basis of what

happens between me and *that* individual, in *that* particular situation.

I hope that this introduction clearly defines the problem which is before us, for only when we begin to see it as a problem that I, as a person, have in attempting to communicate with you, as an individual, will we be able to solve it.

Let me begin by suggesting that in any communication there has to be a sender—or speaker. He may be communicating in a number of different ways. Many people labor under the illusion that we live in a verbal world. This is not true. We live in a non-verbal world. The things that you react to most of the time are non-verbal.

People who are very close transmit to one another, successfully, messages non-verbally. Sometimes non-verbal communication gets us into trouble. We assume that an individual is saying something, when he is not. I see his face in a scowl, and I assume that he is angry, when, as a matter of fact, there may be some other reason for his face being distorted. However, everybody recognizes this problem and we therefore are quick to recognize that we may have made a mistake in our assumptions about non-verbal communication.

On the other hand, we assume that *words* somehow have a real power about them and that when we hear an individual speak, we automatically know what his message is. Therefore we react as if his words were real and as if we have understood them exactly the way he meant for them to be understood. This is disastrous! There are 600,000 words in the English language (according to Webster's Unabridged

Dictionary), but we use in our daily conversation only about 500 words. Of these 500 words, however, there are 14,000 dictionary definitions. This means, of course, that the speaker has a great problem. He must use some very indefinite tools to attempt to convey a very definite message, and he is not always successful. As a matter of fact, if he attempts it all by himself, without the cooperation of the hearer, he must inevitably fail.

Let me, therefore, suggest some things about the sender of a message that might aid in the communication gap problem, by conditioning the hearer to LISTEN and therefore HEAR what he has to say. If I should suggest a single thing to all of the young preachers here in this audience, with reference to getting your message across, it would have nothing whatsoever to do with the excellence of the way in which you deliver that message. It would have nothing to do with oratory, with pronunciation, enunciation, speaking loudly, standing up, etc. It would have to do with an attitude—an attitude that you have toward yourself and ultimately toward the audience to which you speak. If you take yourself too seriously, then you must inevitably fail. Please note that I did not say that you should not take your message seriously or that you shouldn't take your job seriously. What I did say was that you should not take *yourself* too seriously.

Recently a group of young preachers asked me how to develop a sense of humor, and I answered that one of the first things one must have if he is to have a sense of humor is the ability to laugh at himself. If you cannot see anything funny about mistakes that *you* make, weaknesses that are inherent in *you*, you can never develop a sense of humor. All of your humor will be sick and caustic, all of it will be

directed toward somebody else, and this is the cruelest kind of humor. Humor that really helps to get the message across is humor that begins with the speaker not taking his pompous self too seriously. As the speaker takes himself less seriously, he comes across to the hearer as an individual who has more concern for his message than he does for his own stature. This causes the hearer to listen more carefully. He is not interested in what you think of yourself, in your self-esteem, or your ego. He just *may* be interested in your message, if you indicate that it is more important than you are.

We have talked about the speaker, in the communication problem. Let us now say a word about the message, and what it has to do with the communication gap. The word "relevant" is appropriate here. I realize that this word has been used and misused so often that many will react negatively to it. However, unless the message has relevance for the hearer the communication gap will not be closed.

Relevance has to do with whether or not there is any use in saying the thing that we have to say. Whether it is applicable to anything *real*. Whether it addresses itself to any problem that we *now* have. Whether it applies in any real way to the world in which we *now* live. And this is vital. RELEVANCE MEANS TAKING THE MESSAGE, NO MATTER HOW OLD, AND MAKING IT FIT THE PROBLEM, NO MATTER HOW NEW. No communication takes place unless the one listening feels that what is being said is worth his taking it in. This is true no matter at what level you may be speaking. You may be talking about the most serious philosophy or telling the lightest kind of joke. One only hears that which he feels is

relevant to *him*. When someone is telling a joke, you listen to it if you feel this is going to give some pleasure to you, or if you will be able to use it yourself on other social occasions. You don't listen to it if you are not interested in this individual, or if you feel he has nothing funny to say and that what he has to say, you can never use. Even at the lightest level, the message must appear relevant to the individual who is to be the receiver or no communication takes place.

You cannot insist that any individual be interested in something just because *you* are interested in it or because *you* feel it is important. Even if you think you can *prove* its importance, this does not guarantee the interest of your hearer. You do not have the right to ignore or "shake off the dust of your feet" upon someone because he does not consider what you have to say important. A member of the young generation, a black man, a preacher (to name a few who are "hung-up" with this problem) get deeply involved with what they consider the crucial issues of life. When adults don't recognize the earth-shaking importance of some crusade a group of youngsters have embarked upon—or when a group of white people do not leave all and take up the fight for black rights (as the black man interprets them)—or when people do not become inflamed with the missionary spirit or get gravely involved in the fight against what the preacher considers to be immorality—all three groups, in turn, consider their hearers unfeeling, unaware, uninvolved, unChristian, unworthy, and a number of other "un's" that we might mention.

*Such attitudes attempt to lay on the shoulders of the hearer the burden of recognizing the relevance of the message.* Two suggestions are pertinent here. (1) If the message is really important

it is incumbent upon the speaker to find a method by which the hearer may be made aware of the importance of it. (2) It may be that the message only *seems* relevant to the speaker and is not *really* relevant to the hearer at all, or perhaps some other message is more important to the hearer at the moment; if the speaker refuses to address himself to *this* one, the hearer is not disposed to hear any *other*. This is the case when the hearer is in deep need or sees others in deep need of service for hungry stomachs or injustice or some other very present need. In this case, one who insists in talking about church membership or some such subject will not only find deaf ears among those who see the suffering of mankind today, but will also find them viewing him and his message with utter disgust.

The third phase of the communication problem has to do with the vehicle itself. By the vehicle, I mean the word and the sentences and phrases in which the word is placed. I wish it were possible for me to talk with you about relative words, without people immediately assuming that I am talking about relative truth.

The word "truth" itself is a good example of the problem that exists in the use of words. Sometimes the word "truth" may refer to the existence of some objective thing. On the other hand, the word "truth" might refer to what is known *about* that thing or to the essence of the thing. If we think of "truth" as being an understanding of the total essence of a thing, then it must always be relative to *our* position, because we are fallible beings and can never understand the *total* essence of anything. But—if we define "truth" as being what God understands and knows about a thing, then "truth" becomes absolute. Because words are of human invention, then words, as we have just seen, are

constantly subject to revision and must be understood relatively—that is, in relation to the individual who is using them and the context in which they are being used. Just as a single letter varies in its meaning when it is moved from one word to another, so a *word* varies in its meaning when it is moved from one context to another. Only a recognition of this and a willingness to give to the speaker total latitude in the use of words will permit us to break down the barriers to communication which exist everywhere. I must allow you to define *your* terms as *you* wish to use them, and *I* must strive to understand them in the way *you are* using them.

Sometimes we treat words as if they were concrete things and therefore unalterable. I often ask my classes what a word means—any word. Those who have been in my classes very long immediately answer, “IT doesn’t mean anything; what do YOU mean by it?” We hate to admit that we can’t prove our position with a dictionary, but this is true. Dictionaries and lexicons can help, but they only give a range in which to locate the target. The final definition must be found in the context in which the writer or speaker places his word.

The practical value of this is seen in a little story I would like to relate to you. I was in the home of a friend once when his little four-year-old got into the baby’s room and opened the Vaseline. The results you can imagine! Vaseline all over the draperies, the floor, the door knob, etc. Mother, upon arriving on the scene, immediately threw a “fit.” She was about to “lecture” the four-year-old when I asked permission to talk with him alone. He was most upset by his mother’s upset. I asked him if he had made the



mess, and he said, "No." I then asked if he had taken the top off the Vaseline. He readily admitted that he had. I then asked if he had put his fingers in it, and he admitted to this also. I then asked again if he had made the mess, and he again said, "NO!"

There are two lessons in this story. First, we should note the little boy's upset at his mother's upset. He just couldn't understand it. Why? Because he didn't see any great problem. He didn't see any advantage in having draperies with no Vaseline on them. He couldn't see that the Vaseline hurt the floor or the door knob. Thus his standard of what was good and proper was totally different from his mother's, and when she expected him to live up to a standard which he did not share or understand, it was an unreasonable expectation.

Second, the word "mess" didn't mean the same thing to him that it did to her. He did not connect his action of experimentation with the subsequent appearance of Vaseline on the draperies, floor, and door knob. All of this contributed to his HONEST reactions. Mother, on the other hand, expecting him to interpret the situation as *she* had, assumed that he was being dishonest in denying having made the "mess" and that he was a "bad boy" for having done it in the first place.

How typical this is of us. We assume that the individual is responsible to the same things we are, because we assume he has had the same background we have and that his understanding of things is like ours. When he reacts differently from the way we do, then we assume he is dishonest or is evil or is being untrue to what he knows to

be right. You can imagine the problems this presents in attempts at communication.

The fourth member of the communication problem is the receiver—the hearer. Even if the speaker has been well-schooled in his task, the message made relevant and vital, the word cared for so that it is not expected to do more than words are capable of doing—we can *still* fail to communicate if the *receiver* is not operating correctly.

As a listener, you must bring to the communications situation a number of very vital things:

(1) A willingness to hear something which is new or different, without turning it off before you have time to really evaluate it.

(2) A willingness to take the time to listen carefully to what is said without imposing on the speaker *your* rules and definitions.

(3) A recognition of the weakness of words, so that you don't expect them to do too much and thus make unwarranted inferences.

(4) A sympathy for the speaker, realizing that he must present his subject as it appears to him.

(5) A genuine desire to communicate.

It isn't so much our words which foul up our communication, but what we assume they mean or what we assume is going on in non-verbal communication. Let me give two examples which are close to home. Because we have become thoroughly disenchanted with ritual and meaningless worship, some observe people in church with the constant assumption that their actions are hypocritical and

meaningless. Attendance at church seems to say, to some young people especially, that the one who is careful of his attendance is a slave to ritual and has no spiritual contact with God.

On the other hand, many of the older generation (preachers and teachers especially) have viewed with alarm the gatherings of young people when they turn the lights low and hold hands. The ones who react negatively to this see in it something mystical or evil as if the youngsters were on a drug trip or were practicing some black religion.

In each instance the ones reacting are reading into the situation something which they had no right to infer. The words of youth, which disdain corporate church worship as empty and meaningless, make assumptions which they have no right to make and judgments which are not theirs to make. The statements of older people which liken singing and praying together by young people, when the lights are low and they are holding hands, to LSD trips are morally and ethically far off-base. To make such assumptions is to step far beyond the bounds allowed by the facts at hand or the attitudes of Christians.

In each instance, the non-verbal communication has been grossly misunderstood and reacted to in a false and destructive way. What could have been done?

(1) There might have been a pause for reflection before reaction set in.

(2) Some careful listening to those who were the participants would have helped.

(3) A recognition that others may not be saying, with their non-verbal communication, what appears to ME, and

willingness to admit the possibility that the reactor might be wrong.

(4) These three things PLUS a Christlike attitude and non-judgmental approach might have preserved communication instead of widening the gap.

You have the right to ask, "What do we do about it?" However, I don't think this is the kind of problem that can be solved with a lot of rules. There is just one rule: CARE ENOUGH TO TAKE THE TIME TO REALLY LISTEN. *Then your responses will be more readily heard (because they have your heart in them), instead of being ignored (because they have your ego in them).*

The language of love is sacrifice, and there is no greater sacrifice than time. To give someone my time is to give him a part of my life, and this is the kind of sacrifice which counts.

When I was a boy, we were poor people. My father worked hard to feed the family. Therefore when he gave me a gift, such as a new ball glove, it represented real sacrifice, and it said, "I love you very much." However, if I should give my son a ball glove today it wouldn't say the same thing because it would not represent the same sacrifice. Money is not that scarce any more. The thing which I can give my son which represents real sacrifice is not bought with money; that's too cheap. It's *time*, a much more precious, and in our age a much more scarce, commodity. The substitution of money for time has caused much of the communication gap between the generations today. Our youth cannot understand the older generation's "hang-up" with money and material things, and the older group can-

not understand the youngsters' disdain for money.

As a young preacher I decided that I was going to save time for my family. I had heard too many stories of preachers' families being left out because the preacher was so busy with other people. I decided to set aside every Friday night as family night. Nothing would interfere with this one night. I was proud of my solution until I began to watch the boys come in on Friday night with solemn expressions that said, "We have an appointment with Father tonight." Then I realized that this wasn't going to work. What was the trouble? Simply this: My kids didn't need a special night set aside each week. The time they needed was five minutes here and there WHEN I DIDN'T HAVE IT! Time given to them which had to be taken from something else. Time which was sacrificed for them.

One evening when I was in a hurry to get to a business meeting, my smallest son came in and sat on the bed while I was getting dressed to go. Just as I started to rush out of the room, he called me back. In his hand he held the picture of his class at school—first grade. He said, "Daddy, would you like for me to tell you the names of all of these kids?" I almost replied, "Not now, Barry, bring it to the office tomorrow and we'll look at it." Then I realized what I was about to do—give an appointment to my six-year-old son. That did it! I took off my coat, loosened my tie (gave up on the business meeting) and sat down on the bed for him to show me the picture. It is important to take off the coat and tie; most of the time that little boys get from their fathers is time on the run. "Hurry and say what you want to say, I've got to be off," one's actions seem to say. This says, *non-verbally*, "You are interrupting me, but I have to put up with it because you are my son."

It is important that you *give* time to people, young and old, if you expect to communicate. Time freely given, which could be used for yourself, is the kind of sacrifice which says, "I love you." It is this person that you listen to, because you know he (or she) cares enough to listen to you. This alone will break down the communications gap, the generation gap and any other gap which exists between people.

Roy F. Osborne

# THE CHRISTIAN IN A SECULAR WORLD

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## EDUCATION

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## PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH

*Book in Progress*



"Aristotle's *Rhetoric*: A Translation with Introduction and Notes."

### *Published Articles*

"Munucian, *On Epicheiremes*: An Introduction and A Translation," *Speech Monographs* (March, 1964), 54-63.

"The Classical Epicheireme: A Re-examination," *Western Speech* (Summer, 1966), 151-155.

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"A Note on Quintilian's *Vir Bonus*," *Southern Speech Journal*, (1970).

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"The Twelfth Century English Homily," for the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*.

"Interlacing and Medieval Rhetoric," for *Speculum*.

"Rhetoric and Personality in Chaucer's Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale," for *Modern Philology*.

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*Convention Papers*

"Changing Concepts of the Classical Epicheireme," Speech Association of America Convention, Cleveland, Ohio, 1962,

"Critical Edition: Focus for Research in Public Address," Speech Association of America Convention, Chicago, Illinois, 1964.

"Speech Pedagogy in Rome," Speech Association of America Convention, New York, New York, 1965.

"Early Medieval Preaching in England"; The Biblical Forum of Abilene Christian College, Abilene, Texas, 1966.

"Early Medieval Preaching: The Homily," Conference of Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1968.



- "Medieval Preaching and Rhetoric," Medieval Seminar, University of Calif., Davis, March, 1968.
- "The Lesser Latin Rhetoricians," Conference of Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1968.
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- "The Lesser Latin Rhetoricians," Conference of Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1968.
- "Cicero on Humanism and Rhetoric," UCLA Colloquium on Rhetoric & Humanism, Spring, 1969.

### PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Referee for papers to *Southern Speech Journal*, 1967, 1968, 1969.
- Member of Planning Committee, "Symposium on the History and Significance of Rhetoric," UCLA, 1967.
- Referee for papers to *Southern Speech Journal*, 1968.
- Chairman, "Section on Middle English Literature," Conference of Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1968.
- Chairman, "Section on Rhetorical Theory," Western Speech Association Convention, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1968.
- Associate Editor (Classical Rhetorical Theory), *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 1968-69.

### Memberships

- Repertoire International des Medievistes, 1968-.
- The Medieval and Renaissance Center at UCLA, 1965-.
- The Renaissance Society of America, 1968-.
- The Speech Association of America, 1962-.
- The Western Speech Association, 1963-.
- The American Philological Association, 1966-.
- American Association of University Professors, 1964-.
- Phi Kappa Phi, Delta Sigma Rho, Pi Kappa Delta.

### Consultative Service

- Accrediting Commission for Secondary Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, 1966-.
- UCLA Engineering and Management Conference, 1964-.

COMMITTEE SERVICE

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Undergraduate Advisor, Department of Speech, 1965-68.

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Representative of UCLA on University of California Scholarship Committee, 1967.

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Liaison Officer to the Danforth Foundation, 1964-65.

AWARDS

University of California Faculty Summer Fellowship, 1964.

*Outstanding Young Men of America*, 1965.

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“Demas, in love with this present age, has deserted me” (II Timothy 4:10). That final lament over a once promising disciple of Christ testifies to the inroads of secularism in Christianity’s first age. For the quick phrase, “in love with this present age,” supplies an almost perfect definition of the secularized mind. Derived from the Latin *Saecularis*, “belonging to an age,” the term secular denotes absorption in the affairs and interest of the world of the here and now. For example, Halford Luccock, in his book *Jesus and The American Mind* pictures a Sunday morning listener hearing the Sermon on the Mount while a considerable part of his mind remains engrossed in the transactions of the Stock Market.

Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of— American Can has gone up to 57... Blessed are the meek— that means that Amalgamated is really buying into it... Blessed are those that mourn— 200 shares at 97 will come... Take no thought for tomorrow— I'll have to cover that drop in Consolidated Electric tomorrow or get caught short... But seek ye first the kingdom of heaven.

In the presence of such a colloquy, Luccock remarks, "It becomes apparent that Jesus states our own unresolved problem: 'No man can serve two masters' (Matthew 6:24)."

Yet, this is precisely the point. Two masters do call the contemporary person. Far from diminished, secularism has continued to mount so that in our own time Georgia Harkness could write a penetrating book substantiating her claim that "Christianity's major rival in the Western world is secularism." Dr. Harkness defines "secularism" as the organization of life as if there were no God. Recalling John Baillie's remark that we may believe in God "with the top of our minds" or "in the bottom of our hearts," she observes that "most secularists believe in God in the first sense but not in the second." They quietly give their major interest to other concerns, reposing ultimate trust in other forces than God.

The proverbial wisdom of modern man expresses the secularist's mind in statements such as "There may be a God—but what does it matter?" Or "It seems as though God plays a part in the lives of certain people. Unfortunately, I myself, have got beyond this stage!" Neither statement argues the reality of God; both dismiss him from consideration as a factor affecting one's life and destiny. And so, Dr. Emil Brunner (*The Church's Witness to God's Design*,

Volume 2 of *Man's Disorder and God's Design*; "Amsterdam Assembly Series" [New York, Harper & Row, 1949], p. 81) has suggested eleven "axioms of the modern man" which show the notions of secularism:

1. Everything is relative.
2. What can't be proven, can't be believed.
3. Scientific knowledge is certain and the standard of truth; matters of faith are uncertain.
4. Beyond death, no one knows.
5. "Real" means seen and handled.
6. The big things are the great things.
7. I cannot help being what I am.
8. Freedom means doing as I like.
9. Justice means equality.
10. To put religion first is religious arrogance.
11. Laws of Nature determine everything.

Clearly these axioms which seem to guide most of our actions, express secularism or "belonging to our age."

Secularism is not so much a philosophy as the pre-rational basis of all potent contemporary life. Like all fundamental, cultural moods or historical forms of consciousness, secularism exists on the level of what are called presuppositions such as those listed above; these are expressed in the variant forms of a given culture's life rather than being one of these forms. It is, therefore, not easy to characterize briefly.

Langdon Gilkey, in his article entitled "Secularism's Impact on Contemporary Theology," suggests four terms which to me help describe secularism: naturalism, temporalism, relativism, and autonomy. These words express an attitude which emphasizes the here and now, the tangible,

the manipulatable, the sensible, the relative and the this-worldly. What is significant about contemporary secularism is that all of the elements of what we might call "ultimacy," have steadily vanished from it: the sense of an ultimate order or coherence in the passage of things, of a final purpose or direction in their movement, and of a fundamental or goodness or meaning to the wholeness of being.

Consequently, contemporary secularism has resulted in two theological crises: (1) the virtual disappearance of discourse about God and (2) the glorification of man and all of his humanity. Regarding the first, it is no accident that the phrase "God is dead" is taken as the symbol of present day secularism. We should also add that *all* the gods are dead — that is, all those structures of coherence, order and value in the wider environment of man's life. Darwin and Nietzsche, not Marx and Kierkegaard, are the real fathers of the present secularism. It is not surprising that at this point a "religionless Christianity" should appear powerfully in our midst, a Christianity that seeks to understand itself in some terms other than man's relationship to God, and to realize itself totally in the "secular," in the service to the neighbor in the world. The end results have been the appearance of the "God is dead" theologies, which openly proclaim the truth of the new secularity described above, reject for a variety of reasons all language about God, and in a thoroughly secular way, concentrate on life and action in the modern world.

Not only does preoccupation with this age erode away the convictions which sustain a relationship with God — its glorification of the exclusively human paradoxically undermines human dignity. The intent is to serve human welfare, ennoble man, and advance all that is in the best sense

humane. For these high objectives secularism has made man an end in himself, taught him that he has only himself to depend upon, and that he is the power base for his own life. Divorced from relation to any divine reality beyond himself, man becomes one object among many in a universe. "Man," concludes Paul Tillich, "actually has become what controlling knowledge considers him to be, a thing among things, a cog in the dominating machine of production and consumption, a de-humanized object of tyranny, or a normalized object of public communications." H. L. Mencken summed up the human plight when humanism has gone full circle: "The cosmos is a gigantic fly-wheel making 10,000 revolutions per minute. Man is a sick fly taking a ride on it." Thus reduced, man falls lower than other members of the brute creation; for no other animal is endowed with such ingenious capacities to threaten, inconvenience, and frustrate others of his own species. Sartre, consequently remarks, "Hell is — other people."

In short, when man's spiritual sight is no longer on God, he comes to have a much higher estimate of himself than reality warrants (Romans 1:22-23). This leads man to live without a sound moral standard and without any recourse to higher principles and realities (Romans 1:24-32). The steps in this disintegration are universal: first, idolatry; then, ignorance of man's own nature; and finally, immorality. Man either gets confused or completely sells out. Then somewhere down the road — after a tragedy or in the cool, honest moment of truth — the loneliness, the emptiness, the separation from everything meaningful hits him.

This is man without God, without a personal, meaningful relationship with God. Do you remember Paul's description of his contemporaries? "...because that know-

ing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened" (Romans 1:21). Isaiah declares that man is in sin without God (Isaiah 59:1-2). Men without Jesus Christ, without a personal relationship to him, are those "whose end is perdition, whose God is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Philippians 3:19). Secular men whose lives are out of step with God are lived "in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart" (Ephesians 4:17-18).

What is the Christian's relationship to this present world? Is the church to concern itself with the agonies of this age or stand aloof? Assuming that all we have said is true, where is the clue to the Christian's relationship to the world? Those of us nurtured in the Christian faith see a primary clue in the person of Jesus Christ. The one whom we call the Christ earnestly sought to overcome worldliness but he did not avoid the world all together.

Jesus spoke of the relationship between the church and the world in his great prayer:

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. I pray not that thou shouldst take them *out of the world*, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world* (John 17:11, 15-18).

Jesus knew that those who take the easy way out of worldliness, who seek to escape and isolate themselves in order to preserve pure religion, end up with something else other than a vital faith in God. He knew they would fail to see that God's definition of pure religion has two sides and provides no such easy escape from the world: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" (Here is involvement with the world's loneliness, heartache, and agony) "and keep himself unspotted from the world" (Here is separation from worldliness). So the Christian's relationship to the world is not either/or, but both/and! In becoming a Christian he separates himself from the evil ways of the world and in living as Christ lived he involves himself with the world's agony.

There is a summary sentence of Scripture spoken about Jesus which comes close to saying what he would say for himself as his understanding of the relationship that his people ought to have to life. "Jesus knowing... he came from God and was going to God, ... he girded himself with a towel... and began to wash the disciple's feet" (John 13:3-5). Clearly this passage indicates the solution which Jesus gives to the critical crises which result from secularism, namely of man's alienation from God and of man's misunderstanding of himself. For Jesus sees the meaning of life first and foremost in the sacred source from which life had come in the beginning and in the divine destination toward which life is moving eternally—that is in a personal and powerful, a loving and just God. And for all the interval between one's origin and one's destiny, the way to significant meaning and satisfaction is through ministering to the needs of the people of the world.



"Knowing that he came from God and that he was going to God . . ."—that was the faith that put eternal meanings into the temporal moments that Jesus spent among men—a vivid consciousness of the sacred source from which he came and the divine destination toward which he was headed. And that same sort of faith can do the same thing for Christians today.

What shall we say of Jesus? He devoted the first thirty years of his life to the carpenter shop and the last three to preaching. Shall we conclude that only the last three years of his life were sacred when he left the shop to enter the ministry? We cannot live in two worlds, for the Scripture states "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Romans 14:8).

Belief in God is no longer, for secularized modern man, a normal part of his mental furniture. Here, I am not speaking of irreligious atheism. But, I speak rather of the problem of faith and unbelief from the point of view of the person who calls himself a Christian. The most serious need which I see in the churches of Christ is knowing God as Jesus knew him. To answer this by saying that it is impossible to know God as Jesus knew him is a "cop-out." The language of the Bible introduces us to a view of knowledge which expresses a relationship in which much more is involved than knowledge of facts, of concepts, or of logical operations. One of the most significant uses of the verb "to know" in the Bible is its use to describe the act of love between a man and a woman. There is expressed, if you will, the ideal of knowledge from the biblical point of view—the total mutual self-revelation and surrender of persons to one another in love. It is the character of a per-

sonal relationship with God which Jesus had which every Christian in the twentieth century so needs.

To know God is to affirm God's power in our individual lives. And what do I mean by that? I mean that we are to say "yes" to the faith that the God who has endowed us with exciting raw materials of our own spirits, at the same time actively supports us with the power and the processes necessary to actualize the best in our human nature. Now, frankly—what concerns me most of all just here is that this suggestion will sound so familiar that most of us are almost bound to assume that long since it has been operational in our lives. Yet, I wonder. How many of us consciously, consistently affirm God's supportive powers and processes? In matters ranging from personal health to world politics, how much of the time most of us are tempted to fret as if we are spiritual orphans dropped on the rotting doorstep of an abandoned planet. In how many patterns of practical atheism are you and I tempted daily to act as if God were dead? Through the squirrel cage of worry, 'round and 'round we go with gaze set on some problem—real or imaginary—giving no attention whatever to the resources within reach adequate to meet that problem. God makes it possible for us to reverse this process, to fix our gaze not on our problems, but upon his powers. Very practically—when death's democratic fingers invade the privacy of our family circles, we are empowered to concentrate not on the valley of the shadow but upon the shepherd of the valley; not on the grief to which we have discovered we are vulnerable, but on the love of which God has made us capable. In time of disappointment—in people or propositions—we focus not on the illusions which we have lost but upon the lessons which we have learned. I offer you the doxology in the letter to the Ephesians,

"Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we may ask or think." Why circumscribe God by our petty presuppositions of what God is likely to do or is capable of doing? Let us let God be as free as he is and set our own faith soaring with repeated affirmations on this refrain, "Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." In short, let us know God. Regularly I go back to the expression of this sort of faith stated poetically by Grace Noel Crowell:

The Power that holds the planets in their places  
 That sets the limits on the restless sea,  
 Holds my life, too, within its mighty keeping  
 Always holds me.  
 I say this over when storms are heavy,  
 I say it when the night is on the land;  
 I whisper that behind the Power Almighty—  
 Is God's kind hand.  
 And so I rest, as the swan rests on the river,  
 Quiet and calm, amid life's troubled flow.  
 I know that I am kept by a Power and a Love  
 That never will let go.

But, genuine knowledge of God who keeps us and genuine faith in the love of a God who keeps us issues gratefully in the love of our fellow man, whom we keep. So, "knowing that he came from God, and was going to God . . ." Jesus did what? "Girded himself with a towel and washed his disciple's feet." Aware of the sacred source from which he came and the significant destination toward which he was headed, he made the days of the years among men, a sacrifice of humble, loving service to the people of the world. That same sort of sacrificial service can fill the interval between our origin and our destiny with the same

sort of abundant and abiding satisfactions.

The real issue that I see confronting churches of Christ is whether we shall be God's chosen people on fire with God's mission or shall we be God's frozen people on pews which we have built? The answer to this question lies in being God's people. Recall the life of Jesus in the four Gospels. The statements from Ephesians and Colossians indicate that God's mission to this world is to reconcile man to Himself and man to man. Since Christ, who is God's instrument for this reconciliation, is no longer physically here upon the earth, Christ has left his church through which God may bring reconciliation to the world. The church, therefore, becomes a staging post for a world mission of reconciliation, not a gathering place for the faithful of a town, village or city. The ministry is understood in terms of leadership in mission, not in terms of guardianship of those already in the fold. Theology is concerned with the stating of the Gospel in terms of non-Christian cultures who need redemption, not with the mutual struggle of rival interpretations of the Gospel. I do not advocate the belief that the church has a merely functional character, that it is merely a means to an end. As I understand the New Testament, the church can never be so regarded, for it is the place where we enjoy, now, fellowship with God through the Holy Spirit. It is even now God's family where we are to be at home. But it is so in what one must call a provisional or anticipatory sense, in a sense which looks toward fulfillment of God's purpose for all men. The church is thus neither a mere instrument, nor is it an end in itself. It is a foretaste, a first fruit, which makes Christians long for the full harvest. It is even now the place where Christians have joy and peace through Christ; it is the foretaste of the banquet to which Christ has invited all men.

Being God's people in the secular world finally means that Christians do not make the error of dividing life into two entirely separate worlds known as the sacred and the secular, but see all of life as the sacred. Sometimes the visible center of the church's life becomes a place known as a church building. We come, therefore to believe that God is more concerned with church buildings than school buildings, that he is more interested in religion than life. We come to believe the Christian's business on Sunday is sacred, but his business on Monday is secular. His work at the church building is sacred, but his work downtown is secular. His prayers over his food are sacred, but what he eats is secular. How artificial! How un-Christ-like! This unreal and unbiblical division will not stand.

When we think of the church exclusively as an organization, then the great mission of reconciliation in the secular world is reduced to a thing we call "the program of the church." Christians are, therefore, expected to be immersed in the program and faithfulness is judged in terms of regularity of attendance at worship services. Hence, membership in the P.T.A. is regarded as the first step toward apostasy. I do not mean to sound cynical but to be realistic. Jesus would say to us "Gird yourself with a towel and wash your disciple's feet." In other words, be the light of the world, the salt of the earth, the leaven of the lump. The world will never be evangelized by a withdrawing church. We will never be able to hire enough people to run the organization. On the other hand Christ, by his great life and example, inspires us at one and the same time to separate ourselves from worldliness and involve ourselves in the world to reconcile it to God.

One great family of the past has designed its family

crest to symbolize what I am trying to say to you. That crest pictured a flaming heart extended in an open hand. The heart ablaze symbolized passionate commitment to God's will and purposes—a personal knowledge of him. The open hand symbolized unceasing service to man's needs—involvement in the agonies of man. So,—what is the Christian's posture toward the secular world? It is to march forth, offering unto God and unto man, a flaming heart in an open hand!

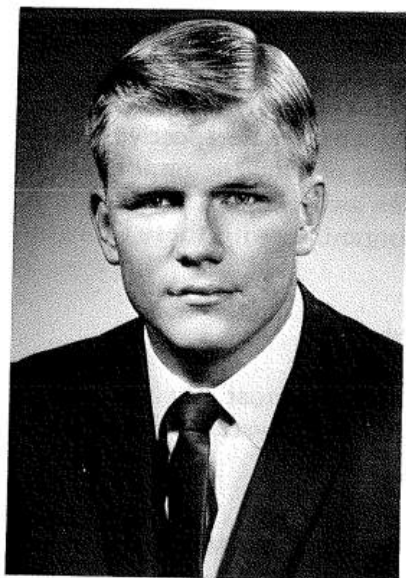
## THE LIVING GOD

JIM REYNOLDS

Jim Reynolds was born in 1942 and grew up in Pueblo, Colorado, where his Father has preached since 1947. He received two degrees from Abilene Christian College—Bible in 1964 and the S.T.B. in 1967. He graduated cum laude in 1964 and received the Trustees' Award. He was a Little All-American basketball player in 1963-64 and was drafted by the Cincinnati Royals of the National Basketball Association.

During the year of 1967-68 he taught at Pepperdine College. At the present time he is working on his Ph.D. at the Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley, California.

He also preaches full-time for the Blaney Avenue Church in Cupertino, California. He has preached regularly since the fall of



1964. He has worked extensively in Campus Evangelism Seminars, on youth lectureships, as well as in gospel meetings all over the country.

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### *Present Campus Situation*

Do college students believe in God? The answer is generally yes, but many students on State as well as Christian campuses have trouble expressing the meaning of their faith. There is a revival of theological interest on the

State campuses. The new quest is largely mystical in tone, and unrelated to any particular ethical system. The current upheaval over racism, the war in Viet Nam and other issues are not related to the new interest in God.

The average Christian college student, normally from a church home, reflects a different type of thinking. The average freshman probably could be called a Deist (God out there who does not act directly today). He normally sees Jesus as head of the "Church of Christ," but not Lord of the universe. Consequently, his faith is not related to his occupational decisions, neither is God related closely to problems like racism and war. The church deist and the hip seer do not expect God to act decisively in their lives.

Neither the deist nor the mystic reflects the fullness of biblical faith. Because of technology and philosophical objection, many students do not see the possibility of God's being very important for the 21st century. It is the conviction of this writer that we need a better perspective—coming from a clearer understanding of what the opponents of Christ are saying and from an awareness of the nature of biblical faith. This lecture is organized with these thoughts in mind.

### *The Unbeliever*

The Christian must realize that most atheists have rejected a specific God or theological system.<sup>1</sup> A doctrine

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<sup>1</sup> Ward, Roy. "Which God Is Dead?" *Mission*, (Abilene: Mission Journal Inc., November, 1968), p. 10.



such as the Trinity in Walter Kaufmann's *Critique of Religion and Philosophy* or an ecclesiastical system like the Roman Catholic Church in Bertrand Russell's *Why I Am Not a Christian* are criticized and discarded as possible tenets of faith. The honesty of some intellectual unbelievers is appealing to many troubled students. History shows (referring to the Crusades, Nazi Germany, etc.) that there is no special virtue in blind faith. Eric Hoffer, a prominent social analyst, attacks the blind fanaticism of the *True Believer*, calling him a very dangerous man. The same argument can be made against the emotional unbeliever who disbelieves just for disbelieving's sake. True Christians since the time of Paul have appeared as stubborn unbelievers to some broad-minded people, because Christians only confess that Jesus is Lord. Shallow belief, then, may become an idol of the mind, inferior even to thoughtful unbelief. Thus the Christian may have something in common with the atheist who hates certain Christian dogmas and practices.

Too many times we overlook the fact that the believer and unbeliever are in similar human positions. Frequently the Christian feels that he is "up a tree" and that the atheist has his feet on the solid ground of unbelief. We must understand that all of us are "up a tree"—all of us are men—breathing, suffering, dying men who at times are searching for the meaning of life. Only an unbeliever who puts his head but not his life in the game can laugh jeeringly at a Christian. Both of us (believer and unbeliever) are on the same limb—playing the same game—not the game of belief or unbelief, but the game of life. The stakes are high, even if one does not believe in a hereafter. Both must speak not from a position of infallibility, but of humility. All too often the Christian faith means "Don't con-

fuse me with the facts” and the negative position means “Don’t confuse me with faith.”

### *Objections to Christian Faith*

Christians who believe in repentance after baptism, as well as before baptism, will seriously listen to criticisms of honest doubters. Some accuse us of creating a god to serve our political and cultural interests. From the time of the Greeks and Romans men have created gods that served the concept of the state—giving it a solid mythological foundation. Many Americans act as if God only blesses Americans. Billy Graham claims that if America will repent God will spare us from nuclear tragedy. However, we must be careful to note that God did not make a covenant with Americans: He made a covenant with Christians, not in order to preserve nations, but in order to free men from sin. America may learn Job’s lesson even if we do come to an unlikely repentance. Let us never manipulate God in the image of Americanism. God worked pretty well before 1492, and he may still have a little energy left after a possible American nuclear tragedy. The Jerusalem of 600 B.C. gave Jeremiah trouble because he prophesied that Jerusalem would fall. The Israelites believed Jehovah would protect the glory of Davidic Zion for them. For them, Jehovah God was completely bound up in their national institutions. After their experience of 587 B.C. (the fall of Jerusalem) and the subsequent “Jehovah is dead” movement, we know better than to ask “Will God always bless the ABM?”

Another criticism comes from Karl Marx, who accused us of making Christianity a superficial escape for middle

class Christians.<sup>2</sup> For Marx, Christianity had become an upper crust movement. Malcolm X has more recently accused us of white racism, making similar statements concerning the churches.<sup>3</sup> Both men were probably more right than wrong, but neither has given us a meaningful alternative. Could it be that Christian repentance is better than apostasy? Jesus long ago spoke out against the same wrongs that Marx and Malcolm X spoke of. Passages like Isa. 53, Luke 4:18f, and Eph. 2 reflect the attitude of the Living God in the 1st century toward class-conscious and racially divided religion. Communists and Black racists are only children of illegitimate Christians. Young Christians should listen to the cynicism of the unbelieving onlookers as they look at the promiscuous Mrs. Robinson of *The Graduate* and cry, "And here's to you, Mrs. Robinson, Jesus loves you more than you will know, wo; wo; wo."<sup>4</sup> The Mrs. Robinsons of America may only be courting a Fatherly illusion, but there is more to the ugly Cross of Calvary than Fatherly illusions for suburban churchmen.

The biggest question asked about the Father God has to do with the question of suffering. How can a compassionate and all-powerful God let men continue to suffer? The question cannot be thoroughly answered, because no man understands the mind of God. However, several questions may help put this question in perspective. Is man re-

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2 A good discussion of Marx and Freud's attitude toward Christianity appeared in D. Elton Trueblood's *Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957) pp. 161-188.

3 Malcolm X. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Grove Press, 1964).

4 "Mrs. Robinson" song from the motion picture *The Graduate*.

sponsible for the good — such as heart transplants and moon landings — and God responsible for ghettos and Viet Nams? Does man's rebellion and selfishness cause any of his troubles? Does the Cross of Christ mean that God is a stone face or that He suffers to free us from destruction? Would you rather be a puppet with no troubles, or a man with troubles? When a Christian lets another person starve to death, who is to blame, the Christian or God?

The Christian faith gives the best perspective to the question of suffering, but it does not give one a systematic approach to a mother dying of cancer, a tragic auto accident, or a Viet Nam. After all, if something tragic happened to you tomorrow, a mimeographed sheet listing fifteen logical reasons for its happening would not help; neither would a well-built mourning bench. What we all need is the assurance of love and purpose. This is overwhelmingly revealed to us in Jesus Christ<sup>5</sup> and through contact with spirit-filled Christians.<sup>6</sup>

### *The Living God of the Bible*

When we look at the biblical description of God we are surprised by the attitude of the believers. A young Hebrew would not talk about God in sophisticated, precise, technical language.<sup>7</sup> Rather, they spoke in warm and even

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<sup>5</sup> Romans 8:28-39

<sup>6</sup> Galatians 6:1, 2

<sup>7</sup> Watson, Paul. *The Meaning of the Old Testament* (Austin, Texas: Sweet Company, 1968) p. 13.

intimate terms of a God whom they had encountered, not in abstract thought and reflection, but in their everyday lives.<sup>8</sup> Worship was always based on Jehovah's marvelous deeds.<sup>9</sup> Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah were not mystical philosophers, but men who had experienced the work of God in history. Jehovah was praised and obeyed, but He was never systematized. The word Holy, used in referring to the marvelous separateness of Jehovah, indicates the utter impossibility of systematization.<sup>10</sup> They trusted in Jehovah without capturing him with their minds. Abraham's overwhelming experience, described in Gen. 12, caused him to lay hold of Jehovah's claims for him and his children. All of the Patriarchs experienced His Lordship of their lives. God called Israel to be his people; at Sinai, through his servant Moses, he offered to make a covenant with her in order to maintain this great relationship. The Mosaic covenant (or agreement) was based on God's bringing the Israelites out of Egypt. The old Law was given in order to maintain a relationship of peace and joy. Jehovah God was constantly on the move, working with the people, never a God of the status quo, always dreaming of fulfilling his promise that through Abraham all men would be blessed.

Jehovah's work with the armies of Israel, primarily from the 13th to the 10th centuries, has brought him into disrepute with some. However, the deaths that he inflicted were done in an attempt to establish the nation of Israel,

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8 Deut. 26:5-10.

9 Josh. 24:1-8; I Sam. 12:6-11.

10 Lev. 11:44, 45.

through whom he could work and bless all men. The Bible makes no sense if the God of Israel is not the God of Jesus. Jehovah God is like a man trying to stop a gang fight. He may have to use disciplinary power to stop the fight, but he is not maliciously involved in the battle. Jehovah educated the Israelites through his involvement with their national life. However, from the 8th century on, the political life of Israel fell apart because of their rebellion against Jehovah God. Then it is obvious that Jehovah was not a bloodthirsty national God. Even in the days of the Prophets, there are many signs pointing to a future kingdom, including all the nations of the world.

We must remember that for the Hebrews the God of History is the God of creation.<sup>11</sup> The oneness and righteousness of Jehovah's universal lordship constituted a sharp break with pagan polytheism and nature worship. The writer of Genesis clearly points out that Jehovah is working to free men from sin because it is His creation that has fallen away. The book of Genesis (The Beginnings) was written sometime after the Exodus from Egypt (ca. 1280). One of the purposes was to answer the question "What am I doing here?" referring to the misery and uncertainty of life after the Exodus from Egypt. The stories of rebellion and idolatry, including Eve, Cain, Noah, and the Tower at Babel, point out the hopelessness of lost men. Israel had been called out of Egypt in order to become the people through whom Jehovah would work to save all men.

The Old Testament is dirty and difficult, not because

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<sup>11</sup> Gen. 1-12.

of God's works, but because of man's rebellion. In spite of the tragedy of Israel's unfaithfulness, God was able, in the fullness of time, to bring us to Christ. Jesus is the Center of all of God's dealings with men.

Those who knew Jesus in the first century experienced something they believed to be the work of God. They said these things: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.<sup>12</sup> God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.<sup>13</sup> Jesus, the perfect sacrifice, died in our place,<sup>14</sup> taking our sins on him. He was buried and by God's power on the third day he broke the power of sin, death, and hell.<sup>15</sup> He ascended to the Father and is reigning Lord of the universe and Head of the Church.<sup>16</sup> His Spirit has been poured out on all Christians.<sup>17</sup> He is directly involved in the lives of Christians until the end of the age.<sup>18</sup> For them God's invasion was utterly decisive, the dawn of a new age. The Jewish Christian gasped at the thought of Jehovah's being Abba Father.<sup>19</sup> The Hellenistic converts were amazed by the intimate fellowship of all men in the Church.<sup>20</sup> The

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12 John 1:14.

13 2 Cor. 5:19.

14 1 Cor. 15:3.

15 Rom. 8:1ff.

16 Eph. 1:19-22.

17 Acts 2:38; Acts 5:32; Rom. 8:9.

18 Matt. 28:18-20.

19 Gal. 4:1-4.

20 Eph. 2:1ff.

healing power of God's "make friends" message <sup>21</sup> was glorious to behold in the lives of men. Words like Love, Peace, Joy, Hope; words that men dream about, suddenly were alive in men. <sup>22</sup> This God is not the product of mystical genius; He is not a clock-maker who winds us up and forgets us. He is not a nature god — trapped in the seasons of life. He is "Abba God" — Creator and Liberator.

It is tragic, today, when God is packaged and frozen for future use. The "Good News" God should not be frozen and boxed by deistic trinitarian thinking. The word Trinity did not appear until the second century when the Apologists (defenders of the faith) tried to explain to the Greeks and Jews what the Christians meant by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They were not talking about a celestial committee meeting. But they were saying at least two things: (1) The mystery of God is to be defined by the character of Jesus Christ; (2) The love which we see in Jesus Christ and experience in the Holy Spirit is one with the eternal power and being of Almighty God. <sup>23</sup> One must have experienced the presence of God through the preaching of the Gospel *before he can think of the threeness of God.* The word Trinity has served its purpose, but if we try to become technical conceptualists we will lose the force of the "Good News." We cannot fathom the total reality of God. All we *know* is the marvel of his work in Jesus Christ.

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21 2 Cor. 5:17.

22 Rom. 5:5.

23 Gilkey, Langdon. *Maker of Heaven and Earth.* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1965), p. 252.



"No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known."<sup>24</sup>

*The Living God—1970*

The Living God works on his terms, not ours. We can go a-whoring as did the Israelites, but we will lose the Promise of history if we do. The church is the Body of Christ.<sup>25</sup> God works through us.<sup>26</sup> If we have forgotten the mysteries of Christ, then let us remember the way he works in Christians—30 A.D. and 1970 A.D.

If we are to know the Living God in 1970 we must first let Jesus be Lord of our lives. Conversion is not just a 30 A.D. Happening, but a 1970 Happening. If we do not believe that he is Lord of space travel and heart transplants, but that he is a tired, bewildered man who doesn't understand radar, much less Apollo moon shots, we are not in a Christian relationship with God.<sup>27</sup> As the song says, we are "Born Free." However, we are not free sons of God unless we are in contact with the ruling authority of the universe. The liberating power is only given to those who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ to act in 1970. Only then does the Spirit live in the Christian's life.<sup>28</sup> Freedom

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24 John 1:18 (R.S.V.)

25 Eph. 1:22, 23

26 Eph. 1:19

27 Eph. 1:19-21

28 1 Cor. 12:3

comes from surrender to the Lord of today.<sup>29</sup> It does not come from intellectual, religious games people play with old books and sacred relics.

The second point to understand is that God personally works in us. "If a man does not have the Spirit of Christ he is none of his."<sup>30</sup> Christ *in you* is the hope of glory.<sup>31</sup> Greater is he that is within us than he that is within the world.<sup>32</sup> Christians are not nice people, they are a new creation.<sup>33</sup> The power of God in us is a present reality, the only answer to loneliness, worry, fear, and hate. An uncertain, man-centered, achievement-based religion will either bore or scare you to death. Paul remarked "How very great is the power at work in us who believe." This *power in us* is the same as the mighty strength which he used when he raised Christ from death and seated him at his right side in the heavenly world.<sup>34</sup> Jesus did not come to give us a new religion, a new ethic, but to unleash Power.<sup>35</sup> If this power exists in us, then the Christian faith is alive. If it does not, then Christians should have the courage to stop wearing the name of Christ.

The God of the Good News draws men into a com-

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29 Eph. 1:7

30 Rom. 8:9

31 Col. 2:27

32 1 John 4:4

33 John 3:3-5, Eph. 2:1-10

34 Eph. 1:18-20

35 Rom. 1:16

munity of sharing. "Private Christianity is not Christianity at all."<sup>36</sup> Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, . . ."<sup>37</sup> The fellowship included material goods,<sup>38</sup> confession of sins,<sup>39</sup> corporate worship,<sup>40</sup> and table fellowship.<sup>41</sup> The word "koinoia" (sharing) is the most important New Testament word used to describe the Church. The reality of total sharing among Christians reflects the compassion of God in our century as nothing else can. It is the shadows, the secrets, the private gods, that quench the Spirit. Sharing is based on "counting all things as loss."<sup>42</sup> Unless one has the courage to do that, our standard of living, our class consciousness, our reputations, our bank accounts, our prejudices will cause us to remain uninvolved in a "saintly sort of way."

Finally, the Living God is alive in the "our Lord Come" Christians.<sup>43</sup> Because the early Christians were actually living under the King and not "church-goers," they prayed for the Lord to come as he had promised. The Faith is

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36 Barth, Karl. *The Humanity of God*. tr. by T. Weiser and J. W. Thomas (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 95.

37 John 13:34, 35

38 Acts 2:44, 2 Cor. 8:14

39 James 5:16

40 1 Cor. 11-14

41 2 John 9

42 Phil. 3:8

43 1 Cor. 15:22

more a pulse beat, a rhythm, an exciting expectancy, than it is an intellectual package or a liturgical form. Too many college students have never known the beat, but have felt the dullness of this world's idolatry. Those who do not know God's rhythm oftentimes pick up the pessimistic beat of first-century pagan folk-rock "eat-drink-and be merry for tomorrow we die."<sup>44</sup> Others are worried about their future, like Benjamin of *The Graduate*. Paul's statements in 1 Cor. 15 and 1 Thess. 4 say what John says in the Book of Revelation, that victory over all forces, demons, sin, death, and political powers are now a reality in the lives of Christians. Because "the beat is on," the Resurrection beat, the celebration on the first day is the herald of a New Day,<sup>45</sup> looking back and ahead in time. This is wild-sounding stuff, but when one sobers up a bit it is easy to see that three words may symbolize future historical possibilities—a bang, a whimper, and a trumpet. The bang is nuclear suicide; the whimper is the slow death of mal-adjusted men; and the trumpet is the return of the Lord Jesus. Many Christians are scared of the bang and the whimper because they have never really heard the preaching of the trumpet. Unless we know our future, we will be fearful, materialistic, cynics in the wake of late twentieth-century revolutions. Christians can't march for Christ unless they have the rhythm of God's activity. The only real "soul music" for a defeated world comes right out of the following proclamation:

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44 1 Cor. 15:32

45 1 Cor. 11:26

"The times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."<sup>46</sup>

The Christian proclamation rightly understood makes LSD feel like an aspirin tablet. Who needs to rearrange brain cells when the Living God has captured history?

I read something in a publication from Berkeley, California, that thrilled me and will serve as a conclusion to my remarks. Berkeley is known for the Berkeley Barb, an underground newspaper advocating free sex, drugs, etc. Recently another underground newspaper has been started called *Right On!* The theme of the paper is that the God of Jesus Christ is *Right-On* and is the answer to the University of California's problems as well as the City of Berkeley's. On the back page of a recent copy there is an artist's likeness of Jesus with the words "WANTED" above his head and below the picture the words "JESUS CHRIST, ALIAS: THE MESSIAH, SON OF GOD, KING OF KINGS, LORDS OF LORDS, PRINCE OF PEACE." Under the picture and the captions are these words:

"BEWARE — This man is extremely dangerous. His insidiously inflammatory message is particularly dangerous to young people who *haven't been taught to ignore him* yet. He changes men and claims to set them free. WARNING: HE IS STILL AT LARGE!"<sup>47</sup>

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46 Acts 17:30, 31.

47 *Right-On*. Berkeley, California.



# PANELS





## THE NEW CATHOLICISM

NORMAN GIPSON

Norman Gipson was born in Hall County near Estelline, Texas, on August 29, 1918. With characteristic wit he explains that "Dad did not want us to be deprived of the cultural advantages, and so we moved to Turkey, Texas, when I was just a lad."

He was "born again" in August, 1933. Brother Alva Johnson buried the young Norman—then a teen-ager—in the waters of baptism. Within two years after his conversion, this young Christian was preaching the gospel. From this early beginning has come a thirty-four year preaching ministry which has carried him into thirty states, Canada, and Spain. The great work of preaching has been the central, consuming interest in this dedicated life.

Five years out of his one-third of a century of preaching were spent in New England with the churches in Bangor, Maine, and Melrose, Massachusetts. For two different six-and-a-half year periods he has worked with the church in Grand Prairie, Texas. He visited Spain in 1967 at the request of the Tarrant Road church in Grand Prairie.



He is a gifted, perceptive writer who has effectively employed the newspaper as a medium of evangelism. Some of the very finest results in his ministry in the Northeast were achieved through daily articles in the *Bangor Daily News*. For several years he wrote a column for the Grand Prairie News. He has written for *North Atlantic Christian*, *Power For To-*

day, *Firm Foundation*, *20th Century Christian* and others. He is author of the work *The Steward of God*, and presently writing a book on the life of Timothy to be entitled "*No Man Likeminded.*"

He served as narrator on the KRLD-TV "Way of Truth" broadcast in Dallas, and conducted the "Moment With the Bible" on television in Bangor, Maine.

Brother Gipson brings to the pulpit and the classroom a rich and varied background. His experience in preaching ranges from the well-established churches of the Southwest to the virgin fields of the Northeast. He is known and appreciated among gospel preachers as a fine student who has read widely, but who has concentrated most of the long hours of intense study upon the Word itself. This writer recalls a fine course in Patristic Literature in which Brother Gipson, a fellow student in the class, provided some of the high points of the whole study with his enriching oral presentations concerning early Christian writings and writers.

He has shared this breadth of background and study with many students in special classes at both Preston Road in Dallas and Sunset in Lubbock. Since November, 1968, he has been a full-time teacher in the Bear Valley School of Preaching in Denver, Colorado.

Brother Gipson is possessed of a remarkable versatility. An able linguist, he is capable of preaching in Spanish, but is probably more comfortable while reading and teaching from his Greek Testament. He is an accomplished musician, a song writer, and a skilled music teacher. But first and foremost, he is a preacher of the Word; a teacher of the Word; a student of the Word. In the judgment of this writer, he is one of the great Christians of our day.

— Avon Malone

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"I am a Catholic." These words and a closing door once ended all discussion for devout Catholics, and some

not so devout. But times have changed. The church council Vatican II, being both cause and result of social, moral, and politico-religious influences, has set in motion alterations throughout Catholicism. This delights some Catholics and causes consternation among others.

### *Unrest in the Priesthood*

Joseph Fichter calls the diocesan priests the "forgotten men of the church," Neither pastors nor monsignors, wedged between the laity and their religious superiors, many of them are bitter and unknown numbers are leaving the priesthood.

Nobody really knows how many ex-priests there are in the United States, or whether there has been an increasing rate of defections over the years. O'Neill says that he was informed 'by senior priests and diocesan officials' that those who gave up the priesthood amount to about ten percent of the number of priests in good standing in America. This would mean that almost six thousand ordained American priests are no longer functioning in the priesthood. Others suggest that there are about two thousand 'shepherds in the midst' scattered around our country... the editors of the *Christian Century* suggest that the frequent reports of Catholic priests who marry are no longer news stories and should be taken off the front page and put on the society page of the paper. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph H. Fichter, *America's Forgotten Priests*, (Harper and Row, New York, 1968), p. 167.

But some of these priestly ventures into matrimony will make the headlines.

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP). James P. Shannon, former Roman Catholic auxiliary bishop of Minneapolis-St. Paul, is expected to teach his regular class Monday at St. John's College here. Shannon, 48, and his bride, the former Ruth Church Wilkinson, 50, a Protestant who was previously married three times, returned here Saturday night... the couple was married August 2 in Endicott, N.Y., by a Protestant minister. Shannon then issued a statement to the New York Times acknowledging the marriage.

"I do not intend to leave the Catholic church. It is my spiritual home. I love it dearly and have worked to the best of my ability as one of its priests for 23 years," he said.

But the Most Rev. Leonard P. Cowley, auxiliary archbishop of the Minneapolis-St. Paul diocese, said in Minneapolis, "By marrying, he incurred excommunication, there's no need for a declaration of it."<sup>2</sup>

Shannon is the first American Catholic bishop to marry. He did so over the personal protest of the Pope. Shannon had resigned as bishop some months before his marriage, to protest the Pope's encyclical against artificial birth control. The resignation was not accepted, and the Pope is reported to have worked earnestly to persuade Shannon to change his mind. But the adamant bishop is quoted as writing the Pope, "I have no intention of trying to function as an underground cleric... I have no intention of leading or joining any movement which seeks to hurt the church."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> DENVER POST, August 10, 1969.

Mr. Shannon's dilemma is that of many Catholics. They do not want to leave the church of their childhood. But Shannon's reaction is also theirs: they will not accept the decree of bishop or Pope on matters they view as their private concern. *This strikes at the basis on which Catholicism is built: the supremacy of the Catholic church over the conscience of the individual.*

### *Underground Clerics*

But this protest, "I have no intention of trying to function as an underground cleric," raises questions. How many such are there? How many priests conduct the masses, pastoral visits, and other routines, then meet secretly with groups whose ideas are heretical in the eyes of the church? Nobody knows; but current stories are revealing. Some devout Catholics carry a card in their wallets which reads, "I am a Catholic. In an emergency, call a priest." According to the Catholic Digest, a new rash of cards is available. One reads, "I belong to the underground church. In case of emergency, call an ex-priest." And to ease the sting they give this one: "I am a Fundamentalist. In an emergency, call a Bible."

But the problem won't go away. Thoughtful Catholics freely discuss the latest priest to leave—maybe not to get married; just gone—a nun gone back home to the parents; the college boy visiting back home who denounces the parish church; their own views on birth control or the war in Vietnam. The revolt is general, but often the priest is out front leading the rebellion.

In a question submitted to Ivan Illich, he was asked:

What do you say about the idea of modernist, revolutionary, and guerilla priests in Latin America, the ones who say that if a Catholic is not a revolutionary and on the side of the revolutionaries, then he is in mortal sin? <sup>3</sup>

The question reveals that in some Latin American countries the priests are aligned with the revolutionary, anti-government forces. This indicates a deep disgust with the Catholic establishment; some priests (through motives perhaps humanitarian) are being driven toward Marxism.

With American Catholics, priests included, the choice is not so restricted. One idea that is working like leaven is "re-structure," to give the laity a greater voice in the workings of the church. And this begets more problems. A reviewer writes of

...the 37% of the World Catholic episcopate, who despite their minority position, control the church and see its rule as an upright pyramid with the Pope on top, his bureaucracy of princes and bishops soaking through the spreading middle space and suffocating the mass base, which is, of course, the People. <sup>4</sup>

The reviewer may have been ironic; but the book he was reviewing, *The Demoratic Church*, by Donald Z. Nico-demus, makes a serious effort to invert that pyramid, putting the Pope at the base and the People at the top. Cath-

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Schrag, "Ivan Illich, the Christian as Rebel," *Saturday Review*, July 19, 1969.

<sup>4</sup> *Catholic World*, August 1969, p. 229.

olic laymen—many of them—are weary of domination. They will no longer endure what John Mulholland called “a calm tranquility with their role as second-class citizens in a bureaucratic superstructure.” This is good, for when one glimpses even from afar the free conscience under God, the desire to participate in decisions for the good of the body, more and more truth becomes a part of life. But this new-sought and partially-found freedom of expression in the laity is met with resistance by some of the priesthood, particularly the older members of the clergy.

A New England curate in his late forties remarks bluntly that ‘in this diocese mistrust of the laity is deeply rooted.’<sup>5</sup>

From five years of living in New England, I can tell you first hand that the compliment is often repaid with interest. I heard a Catholic curse the priest—for trying to get him to take TWO books of lottery tickets. How they could love the church and hate the priest was hard to understand, but the impression was clear.

This tension between priests and laymen, and between priests and other priests, shows the depth of the internal schism. With religious orders in trouble all over the world, “vocations” falling off, priests leaving, sometimes going underground, Catholicism is indeed taking on some new aspects.

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<sup>5</sup> Joseph H. Fichter, *America's Forgotten Priests*, Harper and Row, N.Y., 1968, p. 36.

## CIDOC

The Center for Intercultural Documentation in Cuernavaca, Mexico, is directed by Ivan Illich who was baptized a Catholic, ordained a priest, named a monsignor. He now wishes to be known as "Mr. Ivan Illich, a Christian."

Illich's chief significance lies in his challenge to newer orthodoxies... His chief offense is his commitment to a radical humanism against conventional hierarchies and current ideas of social virtue. Illich has set himself not only against the hierarchy of his church but against all artificial mystiques and structures, and against all the barriers of certification, class and distinction that separate men from each other and from themselves. His targets are not specific governments and politicians, but the ideologies and promises that alienate men from their traditional sources of dignity and joy without giving them a better life in return. 6

Behold then an ex-priest, ex-monsignor who simply wants to be Mr. Illich, a Christian. He is opposed to Catholicism (and sometimes to Americanism) when he thinks it is a threat to the dignity of the individual.

So frightening to Romanism are the words and deeds of Ivan Illich, that in June, 1968, he was summoned to Rome and "had been subjected to an inquisitorial procedure on everything from his theological and political beliefs to the kind of parties that took place at CIDOC." His answers were not satisfactory, it seems. In January, 1969, the

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6 Peter Schrag, "Ivan Illich: The Christian as Rebel," *Saturday Review*, July 19, 1969.



Vatican declared CIDOC off-limits to priests, nuns, and other religious. Illich stood. To the list of 85 questions he stated, "The questionnaire does not correspond to principles established in church regulation. Nor is it the way to a humanly and spiritually adequate relationship between Holy Mother Church and her children, even if those children are culprits." He pointed out that he was operating entirely as a layman, and that "the Church has no jurisdiction over CIDOC." When a papal emissary accused Illich of not believing in Canon law, he answered, "I don't have to believe in it. I only have to obey it."<sup>6</sup>

Another question asked by the Vatican of Mr. Illich was,

What do you say about those who say you are 'restless, adventurous, imprudent, fanatical and hypnotizing—a rebel to any authority, disposed to accept and recognize only that of the Bishop of Cuernavaca?'<sup>6</sup>

This is of interest because the Bishop of Cuernavaca is also strongly leaning toward a humanistic rather than Catholic approach to the problems of life. Frederick Wilhelmsen says this bishop "recently declared at the National University in Mexico City that Marxism is the only possible road to actualize the Christian message." Hence the Vatican concern with Illich's relationship to the Bishop of Cuernavaca.

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<sup>6</sup> Peter Schrag, "Ivan Illich: The Christian as Rebel"; *Saturday Review*, July 19, 1969.

Now, some quotations from a potent book by Theo Westow:

The real life of Catholicism is now seen to lie outside Italy (p. 69).

We are not saved by theology but by personal commitment (p. 50).

The human race is no longer there by the grace of the church, but the church is there by the grace of the human race, and through creation, by the grace of God (pp. 38-39).

... the magisterium is not above the Word of God, so here it becomes quite clear that no ecclesiastical function or office is above the People of God (p. 33).

... the 'priest' only appears in the New Testament as applied to Christ, the only priest, and to the whole people of God (p. 64).

There simply is no possible way of renewing the church, changing the mentality, bringing out the Christian commitment, if this must be done by curial legislation. <sup>7</sup>

These hammer blows at the Roman curia, the magisterium (the teaching authority of the church) and the Pope represent another country. Mr. Westow, a liberal Roman Catholic layman, lives in England, and is a translator for the periodical *Concilium*. From a New England diocese, from Mr. Illich's "anti-school" in Mexico, from the guerrilla

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<sup>7</sup> Theo Westow, *Introducing Contemporary Catholicism*, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1967).

priests in Latin America, from the marrying bishop of the United States, from the liberal translator in England, from the uprising laity in America, the storm signals are flying and the old order is changing.

*The Suddenness of the Change*

In 1955 a book by Paul H. Hallett was still trumpeting the traditional view of Catholicism. Mr. Hallett, then literary editor of the *Register*, a Catholic paper published in Denver and claiming the largest circulation of any religious newspaper in the world, went down the old lines. As he approached his summary he quoted Leo XIII in *Immortale Dei*,

... it is the most important duty to embrace religion in soul and in conduct—not any religion one may choose but that which God has commanded and which is proved by certain and indubitable marks to be the only true religion of all religions. <sup>8</sup>

Hallett's book was important enough to be reprinted in 1961 in paperback. Only seven years later a collection of Catholic writings was given the title *American Catholic Exodus!* Here are a few of the statements:

Why were Catholics largely immune or indifferent to the negro sense of outrage? . . . The answer appears to be twofold. Vested interest and social distance prevented a significant alliance of Catholic and negro opinion. (Dennis Clark, *THE CHURCH AND THE BLACK MAN*), p. 92.

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<sup>8</sup> Paul H. Hallett, *What Is A Catholic?*, Collier Books, New York, 1961, p. 187.

...the faceless sister, the interchangeable part, will soon be as outmoded as the dodo. (Maryellen Muckenhirn, CSC... SISTERS, CELIBACY, AND COMMUNITY).

The short story of Catholic lay people in the United States before 1962 is a pathetic one: no leadership, few causes that invited the emergence of leaders, and for its 30 to 40 million membership, a calm tranquility with their role as second-class citizens in a bureaucratic superstructure... (John Mulholland, *THE LAITY AND A MOMENT OF DREAD*) p. 140.

The significance for the Church of what has happened among lay people on the birth control controversy does not really depend on what, if anything, Paul VI and his brother bishops shall finally say to heal the situation... millions of Catholics... have been compelled to consult the moral dictates of private conscience for guidance on how they shall act and speak. And a surprising percentage of them found their conscience teaching something other than the official voice of the church.<sup>9</sup>

Over and over we have seen in these Catholic viewpoints a pointed fact emerging: the individual, the individual's dignity, the individual's role, the individual's conscience, is obtaining a new importance in Catholicism. And this trend, if it continues long, will wreak more havoc with the old authoritarianism of priest, bishop, and Pope. Theo Westow has seen some of the effect:

There seems to me no way out; we have erected an institution in between God and man, and even between God and 'Catholics.'<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> John O'Conner, Editor, *American Catholic Exodus*, (Geoffrey Chapman, Ltd., Wimbledon, London SW 19, 1968).

<sup>10</sup> Theo Westow, *Introducing Contemporary Catholicism*, (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1967), p. 105.

Television has given some treatment to Catholic problems. One of the widest areas of the generation gap is in religion, as the ABC special, "Ferment and the Catholic Church," showed.

The huge void here is between the church's tradition-bound elders and its dwindling number of young priests and seminarians, who are striving for the change. Most of the program was shot in the Archdiocese of Detroit, where we see two seminarians giving their views of the vows of celibacy, which they were about to take. One, Palmer DePaulis, later left the seminary in the belief that the church has not become attuned to the times. We also see an inactive priest, a former Maryknoll rector, who left the order to marry a former nun, and listen to his views on the slowness of his church in recognizing the need for change. The opposite view is expressed by Father Gommer DePauw, president of the Catholic Traditionalist Movement, who says the function of Catholicism is to prepare people for another life and not to act as a social agency. 11

### *Fallen Saints*

The removal of several dozen "saints" from the Catholic rolls caused consternation. A letter from Albert J. McElfresh pinpoints the problem: "Were my prayers for nought when I called upon St. Christopher?" The editor labored. He called it "a large liturgical project." He spoke of the "temporal cycle" and the "sanctoral cycle." Then he added,

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11 *Abilene Reporter News*, August 4, 1969.

Since all prayers are directed to God, even when through the intercession of the saints, we may be sure that our message has always gotten through.<sup>12</sup>

So the thoughtful Catholic may see the editor's conceding the whole fabricated procedure for prayers to the saints. It may not help to read the editor's lame addition, "These saints may still be venerated in private devotion, until further notice." Is it any marvel that Catholics are upset? And don't you thank God, through our Lord Jesus, that there is a Mediator between God and men, and that all may come unto God by Him?

#### *What Shall We Do?*

These suggestions are offered: 1. Don't read more into the storms than is there. Catholicism has through the centuries had its violence and upheavals. 2. Look for sincere individuals, both priests and laymen. Talk with them frankly. Realize that in the process of giving up much error, they may also give up some of the truths they had been taught. Consider their consciences in all you do and say. Some Catholics will tell you that their biggest personal blow was in the changing of the meatless Friday rule. They had been taught from childhood that to eat meat on Friday was one of the most serious sins of them all. Now they hardly know what to think. 4. Study the Bible with any Catholic individual who will read it with you. For conscience sake (not thine own, but the other), use Catholic translations. Study

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<sup>12</sup> *Catholic Digest*, St. Paul, Minn., August, 1969.

carefully John chapter 6. Lead them through the sections about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man. Then have them read aloud John 6:64, our Savior's own comment on that very occasion: "It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." Then ask if the Master had been speaking before of *literally* eating his flesh and drinking his blood, why would he here explain that *the flesh profits nothing*? Read with them in I Timothy 3 that a bishop must be "married but once," and should be "keeping his children under control." (Confraternity Translation). These have been very helpful to other Catholics. 5. Pray for them. Pray that they may come from the bondage against which they are now so fiercely revolting, to the freedom for which Christ sets men free. Someone prayed for you and me, and brought us to Him. 6. Let's get busy. When we think languidly, "I'm gonna convert somebody someday," consider that "Gonna" isn't in the dictionary, "somebody" isn't in the phone book, and "someday" isn't on any calendar. <sup>13</sup>

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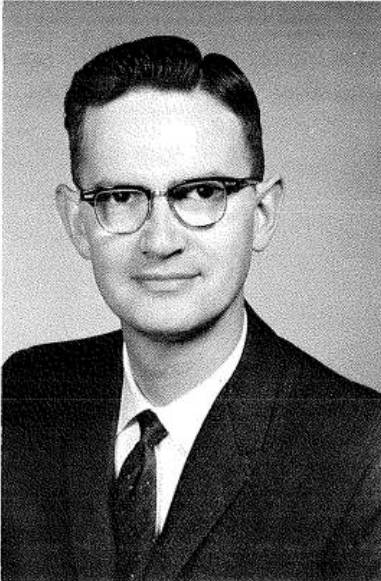
13 Ronald Parker, in Dimmitt, Texas, church bulletin.

## TODAY'S PROTESTANTISM

HAROLD HAZELIP

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His wife is the former Helen Royalty of Louisville, Kentucky; they have two sons, Patrick (11) and Jeffrey (10).



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As we move into the third decade prior to the mystical year 2,000, the sense of change and confusion which characterizes life generally has invaded religion as well. Questions are being raised about basic doctrines from within Christendom, new forms of worship are appearing, and a bewildering criss-crossing of formerly rigid denominational lines has become commonplace. The arrival of the inexpen-



sive paperback has climaxed the impossibility of any one person reading even a sizeable percentage of the new religious literature which appears annually. Consequently, "what is new" in today's Protestantism tends to mean different things to different people, depending upon what they have found time to read. The confusion has spread to the man in the pew who meets theological mavericks through his news media and through a new theological "best seller" hitting the market in paper every few months.

Harvey Cox, author of *The Secular City*, recently told of spending several hours with a dozen German theologians who had been visiting for three weeks in America and who were "bewildered by the confusion of our theological scene." They pleaded with him to provide them with a "map of the Protestant theological terrain in America."<sup>1</sup> William Hordern, whose *A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology* has been one of the most widely read maps of that terrain for the past fifteen years, commented in his recently revised edition that in 1954 (first edition) he had found "a tendency for theologians to search for a middle ground, and find agreement apart from the extremes." However, in 1968, he found Protestant theology "atomized into an increasingly baffling number of trends, schools, and modes."<sup>2</sup>

The well-known names in Protestant thought for the

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1 Daniel Callahan, ed., *The Secular City Debate* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), p. 205.

2 William E. Hordern, *A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology* (rev. ed., New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), p. 230.

last quarter of a century or more—Barth, Brunner, Bultmann, Nygren, Tillich, Niebuhr—are men born in the 80's of the last century, which places the ones still living approximately in the tenth decade of their lives. Barth, Brunner, and Tillich, have all died within the past five years and no new leaders of their stature are to be found. Consequently, trends of today's Protestantism are difficult to identify. Aquinas may have held sway for nearly a thousand years, but the survival span of new theologies appears to be shrinking to something nearer to a thousand weeks or perhaps a thousand days.

### *A Review of the Twentieth Century*

We may get a tangible beginning by noting the rather common division of our century into three periods of theological dominance. During the first quarter of this century, classical liberalism was in vogue. The emphasis was upon the immanence of God in the world, the evolutionary development of man, the comparative continuity between Christianity and the non-Christian religions so that these differed only in degree and not in kind, and in general, the denial of unique objective revelation in Christianity.

The second quarter was dominated by neo-orthodox (or, as it prefers to be called, neo-reformation) theology. Karl Barth, the founder and leading representative of neo-orthodox thought, emphasized the transcendence of God and insisted that revelation was limited to A.D. 1-30 (the personal ministry of Christ on earth). The word of God is not to be equated with the words of the Bible, but it may come to us today through the Bible. The Bible is not

an objective revelation in itself, but is a witness to the revelation which men had experienced; God encounters us today as we read their witness of His encounter with them.

The third quarter has been dominated by Bultmannian existentialism. Bultmann believes that the Bible comes to us in a framework of myth which is not understandable to 20th century man, and hence, it must be demythologized. One does not seek to know what actually happened in the New Testament period, because the writers did not aim to give historical facts, but a description of a way of life by which men today can understand themselves.

Today, we are witnessing the collapse of the reigning Protestant theological motif for the third time within this century. What major characteristics or trends are now to be found?

### *Characteristics of the Present Period*

Interpreters of the current Protestant scene usually begin with the problem of relevance to our times. The very worst charge which can be made against any leader, it appears, is that his approach is "irrelevant." One almost gains the impression that the basic consideration about any religion today is not whether it is true but whether it is relevant. This emphasis is at least in part due to our acute awareness of change in our times.

Certain characteristics of our present period are widely accepted: (1) This is an age of sharply accelerated change, in which increases in such areas as population and knowl-

edge are best described by such terms as "explosion" or "avalanche." Technological change, characterized by computers, automation, and the space age, coupled with social change, forces man to think seriously about himself and his world. (2) The world is becoming increasingly secular, in that the long established distinction between the secular and the religious, the natural and the supernatural, is no longer accepted. Men are not only excited by visions of unlimited human possibilities, but a younger group of theologians also holds that God is present now in the changes and conflicts of our history and is to be discovered primarily through dialogue with "this-worldly" studies, such as sociology, politics, and natural science. (3) The revolution in communications has made it less possible for any person or community to live in isolation from the rest of mankind. This implies to many present day theologians that particular doctrinal traditions can no longer remain isolated from one another, with the consequence that dialogue across the lines of belief will increase, leading toward an "ecumenical theology." This ecumenicity is expected to extend not only to dialogue with the secular disciplines and among the various groups within Christendom, but will include dialogue with non-Christian religions of the world as well.

#### *Prominent Themes in Protestantism Today*

The foremost response to the challenges described above is a sharp interest in the "secular." While "secularism" once stood for Christianity's post-medieval enemy, and is still repudiated, "secularization" is insisted upon by *avant-garde* thinkers who want to embrace the social, mate-

rial, and political spheres in order to serve God and man through "the secular city."

Much of this thought stems from Dietrich Bonhoeffer who dreamed of a "religionless" or "worldly" Christianity—a way of communicating the Christian faith without using the traditional terms of Christian theology. He felt that religion has been wrong in treating the created world as a distraction and emphasized, with Luther, the calling which the Christian has to serve *in* the world. He also felt that many people use religion only to guess at the meaning of existence, with the result that God becomes a kind of "metaphysical glue" or a "God of the gaps" (to explain things we cannot otherwise understand) or of the "boundary situations" of life. He emphasized that man "come of age" no longer needs religion to find meaning or security in life, and reasoned that God has allowed Himself to be "edged out of the world" for the sake of human freedom.

The "secular theologians" agree on what is called a "theology of engagement," that is, a desire to be involved in urban slums, government, politics, and human needs in general, and to formulate their religious beliefs out of their reflection upon this activity. This view of Christianity is illustrated with an analogy popularized by Harvey Cox: God's work in the world is compared to a "floating crap game" and "the church to a confirmed gambler whose 'major compulsion upon rising each day is to know where the action is' so he can run there and 'dig it.'"<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), p. 108.

However, these men disagree on how drastically Christianity must be changed to meet present day challenges. The less radical men are sometimes called "translators" because their concern is to restate what they believe to be the Christian faith in a way which will be faithful to historic positions and intelligible within the new situation. These men are especially concerned about church structures, for example, which they believe to be irrelevant for our time. The more radical men are called "transformers" since they hold that Christianity must be radically transformed for the present age. These include the "God is dead" theologians who tend to reduce all teaching about God to teaching about Jesus Christ, and then to reduce Christ and his teachings to concerns of ethics for living in this present world. It is already apparent that the "God is dead" movement is itself near death, and that the "translators" are much more likely to be heard than the "transformers."

Another concern today is with the importance of history for the Christian faith. Classical liberals tended to deny the possibility of certain kinds of historic events (e.g., miracles). Neo-orthodox theologians tended to say that the literal historicity of biblical events was not important, but rather the message from them. Existentialists emphasize the importance of personal experience *now* at the expense of any concern for the past or future. An encouraging sign for conservatives is the increasing number of younger theologians today who insist that faith which is not based on historical facts is mere subjectivism. The Pannenberg school of theology for example, is attempting to take history very seriously, with the affirmation that the preaching of the gospel is an empty assertion if that gospel is denied its historical base and content.

Other concerns for the historical viewpoint have more practical significance. A sense of history has led to a re-evaluation of the authority of creedal statements in the light of their origin and development in history. An example is the United Presbyterian Church which has formally announced that the Westminster confession of faith is only one of a series of statements about the Christian faith and consequently is not to be "canonized." Hence, these Presbyterians have now affirmed a long tradition of confessional statements, beginning with the Apostles' Creed and concluding with a new one that is known by its date of publication, *The Confession of 1967*. The general recognition of a series of historic confessions rather than one binding creedal statement represents a great change with reference to the authority of creeds from the situation early leaders in the restoration movement in America faced.

A third trend in Protestantism today is the continuing movement toward ecumenism. The largest single movement in this direction is the Consultation On Church Union, which is an effort to bring together nine American denominations (including Disciples of Christ, United Methodists, Presbyterian Church in the U.S., United Presbyterian Church, and United Church of Christ, and Episcopal Church) into one religious affiliation which would include some 25,000,000 members. The target date for a tangible plan of union to be submitted to these denominations is 1969-70. However, enthusiasm for the ecumenical movement seems to be waning.

### *Is Restoration Relevant?*

What is the position of Churches of Christ *vis-a-vis* Prot-

estantism today? What have we to contribute to the alleviation of the chaotic state of religion in our time?

There are many evangelicals today who feel that the horizontal lines of division between religious bodies are not nearly so important as the vertical lines within the various religious bodies which separate those with a deep respect for the authority of the scriptures from those without this conservative conviction. However, we claim to be committed to more than an *admission* of the authority of the Word; we plead for *submission* to that authority. The plea to restore New Testament Christianity is still unique and vital. We are not shackled to Calvinistic theology, as are the bulk of Evangelical people. The emphasis on unity and the movement toward freedom from authoritarian creeds provide points of contact for sharing with others our commitment to undenominational Christianity. Even the thrust away from a "sacred/secular" dichotomy has something in common with our aversion to "clergy/laity" distinctions. The autonomous nature of congregations is exciting to those who are interested in breaking down institutional superstructures and making religion more personal. In fact, if we are willing to *listen*, as well as to *speak*, we may find unexpected reception for a truly undenominational plea.



## THE VALUE OF INTERCESSORY PRAYER (Can prayer change things??)

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*Reared:* Eugene, Oregon.

*Education:* University of Oregon (2 years); Florida Christian College (3 years; A.A.); Florida State University (B.S. in Speech, 1956); Abilene Christian College (M.A. in Old Testament, 1959); University of Southern California (Ph.D. in Church History, 1966).

*Teaching:* Graduate Assistant at Abilene Christian College 1958-1959. Faculty of George Pepperdine College (Los Angeles) in 1962. Member of faculty at Abilene Christian College since 1962, with current rank of Associate Professor, in Department of Bible. Specialized teaching area Old Testament.



*Preaching:* Worked as minister for Central Ave. Church of Christ in Valdosta, Ga., 1954, 1955; Church of Christ in Bainbridge, Ga., 1955-1957; Church of Christ in Burbank, Calif., 1960; Church of Christ in Monrovia, Calif., 1960-1962; Central (formerly Northside) Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, 1957-1958, 1963-1965; College Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, 1965-1966; Minter Lane Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, 1966 to present. Evangelistic work in 17 states, in over 85 meetings and extended lectureships.

*Publications:* Articles in various

religious publications. Sermons in various lectureship and other volumes. Author of *Prayer* in the Living Word Series, published by R. B. Sweet Co. Currently writing a commentary on the Gospel of Luke for the same publisher.

*Married* to the former Barbara Bailey, of Huntsville, Alabama.

*College Work:* Has spoken on the campuses of over 20 colleges and universities.

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For several years I have been fascinated by a study of the New Testament teaching about prayer, both from the practical and theological viewpoints. The inquiry, in addition to the blessings it has borne, has also uncovered certain problems. Among these has been the difficulty in understanding the mechanics by which God has intervened in the process of events to answer human petitions. In dwelling on this point I have felt obliged to avoid the one extreme of saying that answered prayer involved a miracle (in the sense that we conceive of biblical miracles), and the other extreme of saying that the response of God was no more than the natural process that would have operated even without prayer. A resolution point has been found in the doctrine of providence. This non-biblical term is one adopted to explain the biblical reality that God does answer prayer, while steering between the extremes noted. It is to say, for example, that God does upon occasion restore the sick for whom prayer is made, though He does not instantaneously restore them as did Jesus during His personal ministry.

However, since the Bible only affirms that God answers prayer, but does not describe how it happens, there is no uniform concept of God's providence among brethren in Christ. Some, who have a very deep faith in the guidance of God, see almost everything in life as providential and consequently interpret circumstances differently than others, who may possess as much faith, who would limit their view of the number of circumstances that God has providentially directed. Perhaps the differences in viewpoint will never be completely resolved, and must be accepted with love between brethren and the recognition that God's ways are above man's and that man must stand in humility at the threshold of that which transcends his understanding.

We have spoken of answered prayer. We accept this because of our faith in God and His promises. An unbeliever may see the events we so interpret and explain them as natural occurrences. We cannot prove otherwise in the scientific sense, but can still be convinced, because we believe, that things came about *this* way as a divine response to prayer, and that without prayer they would have been otherwise.

When moving to a specific consideration of intercessory prayer, there appeared further recognitions and problems than were evident in previous studies. In the first place it is impressive how often these prayers in behalf of others appear in the New Testament. About one-third of the approximately 100 passages on prayer are involved. These requests include prayers that God would forgive the sins of others; that God would give moral strength or increase Christian virtue; that He would grant deliverance from oppression; that He would give help in the proclamation of the word; that those with special spiritual responsibility

would receive His blessing; for the salvation of the Jews (Rom. 10.1); for one's enemies; and for kings, rulers, and all men that Christians might lead quiet and peaceable lives.

This dynamic concept of intercessory prayer says, "Because we pray *here*, God does something in others' lives over *there*." But upon pondering this, one becomes aware of certain questions. Just exactly how does God intervene in the lives of others? Does He alter the circumstances surrounding them? Does He help them to be aware of what they might not otherwise perceive? Does the attitude of the person for whom the prayer is uttered affect the response of God? What if the object of the prayer feels no need for, or inclination to receive, help? A larger question, which underlies the others, is determining the relation of intercessory prayer to the free will of the one for whom petition is made. What if that individual does not want to accept Christ and receive forgiveness, or does not want to receive greater spiritual strength, or does not want (if a ruler) peace to come and will not work for it? Will God violate the person's free choice to answer a prayer? If man's freedom is a part of God's image in him, certainly the Lord would not contradict Himself by denying any person this choosing faculty. And if we should pray intercessory prayers, which, upon reflection, are actually asking God to remove someone's free choice, how are we going to react in terms of our theology and our prayer life if God does not answer? Suppose, for example, that during a gospel meeting we pray for all in the audience who have not become Christians to respond that night. Some who are there do not want, at that time, to become Christians, so they refuse the invitation. We can say that God answers some prayers with a "No," but, psychologically, such a response takes the fervor and depth of faith from the prayers of some people. Wouldn't it be better

to re-examine one's view of intercessory prayer so that one needn't be put into such a position?

Out of all this perhaps we can establish some firm principles. First, intercessory prayer, as best we can understand, should never ask God to do something which will deny anyone their freedom of choice. Yet we can still keep in mind the fact that God can influence another person in many ways within this "limitation." He may make the one who prays more effective in producing the desired result. He may so order the circumstances surrounding the object of the prayer that certain courses of action will appear more feasible and desirable than they might otherwise. He might bring the other into contact with individuals who could be influential in the right way. But we must remember that people aren't machines, whom God will program into a certain inevitable course of action because we pray.

Second, we believe intercessory prayer will be most effective when the object of the prayer is willing to receive the blessings asked. In almost all of the cases in the New Testament such may logically be presumed to be the case. In the seeming exceptions (prayer for the Jew's salvation — Rom. 10.1; for one's enemies — Matt. 5.44 and parallel; prayer for rulers — I Tim. 2.1f) it can well be argued that our information about the subject of the prayer or the local background is too sketchy to prove them a violation of this rule.

Finally, it is best if the prayer is for God to grant the person something we know from the Bible He is willing to grant. I know that God will answer if I ask Him to make you more loving. I am not sure He will if I ask that He give you a million dollars. When we get away from the sol-

id ground of revelation, our prayers of intercession are open to a subjectivism which can sometimes get out of hand. When we pray for something we are not sure about (since we do not possess the wisdom to know, always, what is best) we might well lay the case before God, tell Him what we believe is best and why, and then ask, in humility, that His will be done.

Having said all this, we must understand that God will be free. We try to understand Him on the basis of His revelation. But we approach that revelation with humility, since none of us is wise enough to have perfect understanding. God may act in ways that we do not fully comprehend, and our rules cannot bind Him. Once we have done our best to understand the biblical material, and constructed our outlines of how we think God ought to act, then we must allow for our inadequate grasp of the evidence, and not try to force God into a mold of our own devising. Our rules for intercessory prayer, then, though the best we can scripturally envision, may still not be big enough to surround the totality of God's action.

We might close this discussion by asking, "Why intercessory prayer?" Four reasons come immediately to mind. First, such activity is a facet of the love which binds the Christian community together. These are people who want very much to do good for one another, and prayer is one avenue by which this is accomplished. Second, if God's response is in some way proportionate to our faith and fervency in asking, it seems to follow that many people praying will be of even greater avail than one person praying. Third, when we are not aware of our real needs, others who are can be praying for us, and thus mediate God's blessings

to our lives. Finally, if we hit those barren times in life when, for one reason or another, we feel we cannot pray, our friends can bear us along on their prayers until the difficulty is past, and then set us down to continue our own prayer life. It is comforting at such times to say to a brother, "I cannot pray. Please pray for me."

We have explored various facets of the prayer of intercession. But prayer is much more than a doctrine to be studied. If it is no more than that, it is really nothing. Prayer is a thing to be done, for God does hear and answer. We must believe this to become the church victorious. The challenge of the hour and of all life is to have such a loving regard for other men, and such a faith in the power of God, that we commit our lives to a fervent ministry of prayer, including sincere intercession for others.

## THE LIMITS OF PRAYER

JAMES LEFAN

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Brother LeFan is a graduate of Abilene Christian College with a major in education and minors in speech and Bible.

He served as a minister of the Jefferson congregation in San Antonio from 1944 to 1946 as assistant to P. D. Wilmeth. He worked with the Missouri Street Church in Baytown from 1946 to 1950 and has been with the Western Hills Church in Temple since 1950.

He has contributed articles from time to time to the *20th Century Christian*, *Power for Today*, *Minister's Monthly*, and *Christian Woman*.



In addition to his work with the congregation, Brother LeFan takes an active part in community activity. He is a member of the Temple Lion's Club and past chaplain.... Board of Directors of Lion's Crippled Children Foundation, Inc.,... Past president and member of the board of Bell County Society for Crippled Children.... Trainer of "advisors" in the Explorer program of Scouting.... Bell County Chairman of Mayor's Commission on Mental Retardation.... member of executive committee of Bell County National Foundation MOD.

He is also past President of the Alumni Association of ACC and a regional coordinator for the Herald of Truth.



Whatever is necessary to the Christian for a wonderful, happy, victorious life God can supply. "And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8). Jesus has promised, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22). The possibilities of prayer are tremendous and the blessings promised in answer to prayer are almost beyond believing. Yet prayer has its limitations. If we are to find fulfillment in our prayer life we must come to understand both the possibilities and the limitations of prayer. There is an amazing amount of misinformation about prayer now being pushed at us from many sources. The would be friends of prayer sometime dim its light by their extravagant claims: their pretensions deter truth-loving minds. Honesty and love for truth require that we trace the limits of prayer as closely as we may.

## I. EXPERIENCE TEACHES PRAYER'S LIMITATIONS

We are early impressed with the limitations of prayer through our own experiences. We make many requests that are never answered in terms of our request. We have prayed for health, and sickness has come; we have prayed for loved ones to recover from an illness, and they have died; we have prayed for material blessings, and they have never come. The apostle Paul also shared this experience with us. Thrice he prayed that his thorn in the flesh might be removed, but it was not (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). We all remember reading the "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn"

and we recall Huck talking about this matter of prayer. He said,

“Miss Watson she took me in the closet and prayed, but nothing come of it. She told me to pray every day, and whatever I asked for I would get it. But it warn’t so. I tried it. Once I got a fish-line, but no hooks. It warn’t any good to me without hooks. I tried for the hooks three or four times, but somehow I couldn’t make it work. By and by, one day, I asked Miss Watson to try for me, but she said I was a fool. She never told me why, and I couldn’t make it out no way.

I set down one time back in the woods, and had a long think about it. I says to myself, if a body can get anything they pray for why don’t Deacon Winn get back the money he lost on pork? Why can’t the widow get back her silver snuffbox that was stole? Why can’t Miss Watson fat up? No, says I to myself, there ain’t nothing in it.”

Why deny the fact? Many of our prayers are not answered in the sense that we received what we prayed for. The faith of some has been lastingly injured because they had been led to believe that every prayer would be answered according to their sincere desire. They were never taught the conditions and limitations of prayer.

But there is another side, and a saving grace, to our experience. Many of our prayers and the prayers of fellow Christians have been answered. Many honest, sincere, and godly people, who neither would deceive themselves nor others, are absolutely certain that in their hour of crisis God heard their prayer and delivered them. Their testimony, “Only prayer made it possible,” is too humble, too heartfelt, too filled with conviction, and given with too great a frequency to be glibly discounted. Ashley Johnson was

convinced that he was able to keep open his School of the Evangelists through prayer. Gus Nichols is sure that prayer played a major part in his recovery from heart trouble. Martin Luther was sure that God had answered his prayer:

No one believes how strong and mighty prayer is and how much it can do except he whom experience has taught, and who has tried it. It has raised up in our time three persons who lay in danger of death, myself, my wife Katha, and Philip Melanchthon in 1540 at Weimer.

We can dismiss such testimony as mere "wishful thinking" if we choose. Yet such a dismissal does not seem rational in view of the experience of so many thousands of people who point to specific results that have come in answer to their prayers. With thousands of people involved, the mathematical probabilities are all against the theory that these answers are mere chance coincidences. Answers to prayer have come too often and in too striking a manner for them to have been matters of mere chance or coincidence.

It seems to me the following truths are evident about prayer from the viewpoint of our personal experience. Some of our prayers have been answered. Some have not been answered. How can unanswered prayer be explained in the view of Jesus' teaching, "If ye shall ask anything in my name, that will I do" (John 14:14)? — "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7)? Unanswered prayer has at least two explanations. First, prayer may be unanswered because its conditions have not been met. (Note the two conditions in the preceding passages: "in my name" or according to my nature and "If ye abide in me, and my

words abide in you.”) Second, prayer sometimes cannot be answered because there are limits to prayer imposed by the wisdom of our heavenly Father.

We are now ready to examine some limits of prayer. These limits are not always easy to determine. In this study I have suggested limitations to prayer that are imposed by causes outside ourselves. Obviously there may be many personal reasons why prayer is hindered or limited in our lives. A lack of faith (Mark 11:24), selfishness (James 4:3), disobedience to God’s commandments (John 9:31), and marital discord (1 Peter 3:7) are only a few of the failures within us that may limit the power of prayer in our lives.

## II. PRAYER IS LIMITED BY THE WILL OF GOD

“And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us” (1 John 5:14). This passage makes it perfectly clear that God will not answer a prayer that is in violation of His will. Prayer can be fruitful only as it brings the human will into accord with the divine will. We do not pray in order to persuade God to change His mind, but to bring our will into harmony with His. The blessedness of prayer is in choosing the Father’s good and acceptable and perfect will. Jesus, by example, taught us to pray, “not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26:29). Prayer must always be brought within the limits of God’s will if it is to be answered.

This limitation is necessary. God’s will is supreme. The well-being of the universe is bound up with the execution

of His will. Therefore, He cannot grant the petition which is not in harmony with His will. This limitation is necessary also, inasmuch as different suppliants may be seeking from Him at the same time things which are opposed to each other. For example, during the last world war Christian people from many different nations were all praying for military victory. We could, with much more profit, pray that God's will be done among all the nations.

It is also highly beneficial to man that God's will be done. Man does not always pray wisely. We are thankful that God has not granted some of our requests. The judicious and kind parent does not give to his child the thing which he asks for, if it will prove hurtful to him.

Someone may well ask, "If God's will must inevitably be done, why pray at all?" Tony Ash, in his book entitled *Prayer*, makes the suggestion that man should pray because God's will in some instances is conditional upon man's will. This truth is seen in God's will for Israel in the Old Testament. When Israel obeyed God, it was God's will to prosper and bless Israel. When Israel disobeyed God, it was God's will that they be punished. God's will meant that he would take one of two courses depending upon man's will. Even in this sense God's will must be done, but what happens is conditioned by the human response to God.

### III. PRAYER IS LIMITED BY MAN'S FREE WILL

The prayer of one human being can never cancel another's free-will. If God's will does not override man's

will, neither can a fellow-man's prayer. For us to pray in any way that would violate this quality in his nature is to pray amiss. We may well pray that God may use us or some other influence to change a man's mind, but for us to ask God to overwhelm the man and make of him what he does not freely desire to be is to ask God to violate the freedom he gave to man. This He will not do. When we pray in the behalf of others it will be well to remember that all men are free under God to make their own decisions and we may not pray in any way which violates this freedom.

#### IV. OUR PRAYERS ARE LIMITED BY GOD'S WORLD

In the very nature of things there are some things that cannot be accomplished through prayer. We cannot reverse the seasons or pluck the moon out of the sky. We cannot suspend the law of gravity or make a mustard seed grow watermelons. Few people believe that when Jesus said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove" (Matthew 17:20), he meant such mountains as the Alps or the Rockies. Some may insist that if our faith were strong enough we could move such mountains, but in the long history of prayer I do not know of a single mountain moved in this fashion. Moreover, thinking men would not pray to have them moved. We could not live in a world where mountains were constantly moving about. The well-being of our world depends upon a certain faithfulness and constancy in such things as mountains, rivers, gravity, and seasons.

Suppose a young man enjoying a wonderful evening with his girl should pray, "Oh that this night might never end!" and thereby should turn the world dark. That may be fine for him but not so fine for those of us waiting for the day so we can go fishing or play golf. It is plain, even in our limited view, that free men can endure only in a faithful universe. This means that some things in our world must be governed by fixed laws and always be dependable. Yet even here we proceed with humility because there is so much we do not know even of laws that we regard as fixed. Many of nature's laws are "fuzzy with mystery." There may well be in some of these laws a flexibility not now known to us which will enable God to move in answer to prayer. Just where the limits run who can closely trace? We would not pray for the sun to rise in the west, but would pray for the wind to change if caught in a forest fire. Where do the limits run? We would not pray for a new leg to grow where one had been amputated, but would pray for recovery from a heart attack. Where is the boundary? It seems to me the greater the apparent constancy and inflexibility of a natural law, the less the power of prayer. The greater the apparent variability and flexibility of a natural law, the more confidently we pray.

#### V. PRAYER FOR PHYSICAL HEALING IS LIMITED BY GOD'S SENTENCE AGAINST SIN.

If all our physical ailments could be remedied through prayer, none of us would ever be sick, nor would any of us ever die. The existence of sickness, hospitals, and graveyards testify that prayer has its limitations in healing the sick.

Man's sickness and death is the result of man's sin. "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned" (Romans 5:12). Death, and that which produces it, is God's sentence upon sin and from it there is no appeal. We must all ultimately yield to the inevitable and die either from disease, accident, or old age.

But when this realism has been honored, another fact, equally realistic, demands recognition. This fact: the power of prayer in the realm of health has hardly been tapped. Even in afflictions that seem beyond cure, deliverance has come—by prayer. Just how broadly effective prayer can be is not fully known, but it does have its limitations. Here, for example, is a man with an amputated leg. There are many things about this situation that are fit objects of prayer, but the restoration of the leg is not one of them. The same thing is true when parents pray for the restoration of life to a dead child. It simply cannot be done; there is no reason on earth for thinking that it will be done.

Shall we then pray for the sick? By all means. Did not James say, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray . . ." (James 5:13). Let us lengthen out our years by the wise use of medical aid, prayer, and by observing the laws of good health. But let us also remember that the sentence has gone forth, we cannot change it, and eventually we must wear out and die in spite of every precaution. We are wise if we recognize and accept prayer's limitations; if we face the reality that the time will come when all human aid will be unavailing, and divine aid, however fervently sought, will not be found. From some sickness we will not recover, for God has decreed that man must die because of sin. Yet,



even in death there is victory for the Christian, for this is the means that God uses to populate the heavenly kingdom.

## VI. SUMMARY

An understanding of the limits of prayer as well as its possibilities is essential to peace of mind and an effective prayer life. Confidence in prayer has been undermined by many false claims and by a failure to know and understand its limitations. Briefly we have tried to trace some of the limits of prayer. Though we could not always be sure just where the line ran, these were some of the conclusions drawn: 1. Prayer is limited by the will of God. His will must be done for the good of man. Yet God's will does not outlaw man's will. God leaves wide room for man's prayer. 2. Prayer is limited by man's free will. If God's will does not override man's will, neither can a fellow-man's prayer. 3. Our prayers are limited by God's world. There is a faithfulness of earth and sky, of life and death, which our pleading cannot touch, and without which we could not be free in life or prayer. Yet that faithfulness is overlaid by a free activity in which men are worker's together with God.

There are limits to prayer, but sober thought reveals that they are of such a nature that they are for our good and not our hurt. Neither do they discourage the presentation of every need to the ears of our loving heavenly Father. The limits of prayer are then desired limits. If they are desired, they are no longer limits.

# THE GROUNDS OF MORALITY

ROY OSBORNE

Roy F. Osborne (1969)

*Born:* Nashville, Tennessee, December 28, 1922.

*Married:* Nova Dene Potts, Nashville, 1947.

*Children:* Four: 3 boys, 1 girl — ages ranging from 8 to 21.

*Education:* David Lipscomb College, Abilene Christian College, University of Denver, University of California.

Degree in Clinical Psychology, University of California

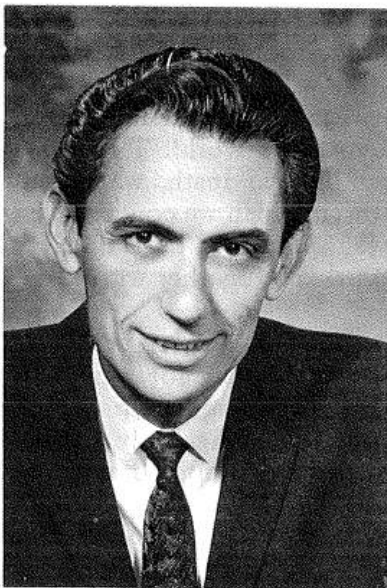
*Occupation:* Minister, Church of Christ, San Leandro, California, for 11 years. Minister in Bay Area 16 years.

Counselor, Lecturer, Author.

*Other fields of special studies:*

Communication (including General Semantics).

Delinquency (which includes six years as teacher-counselor at San Quentin Prison).



*Organizations:*

Board of Directors: MIS-  
SION magazine

Board of Directors: East Bay  
Association for Retarded  
Children. (EBARC)

Editorial Staff: Christian Fam-  
ily Book Club.

Editorial Staff: POWER FOR  
TODAY magazine.

Member: Speakers Bureau,  
San Leandro Chamber of  
Commerce.

Member: International Society  
for General Semantics.

Member: Parachute Club of  
America.

Member: Aircraft Owners and  
Pilots Association. (In-  
strument rated commer-  
cial pilot.)

Member: Northern California Golf League.

*Book:* "From the Mountain to the Cross" (Biblical Research Press)

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This paper will not attempt to interpret the moral code of the Bible. It is not our intention to say WHAT is right or wrong with reference to various moral issues, such as those having to do with dress, recreation, etc. It is the purpose of this paper only to present an approach, by which it may be argued that we need a revealed code of morality.

The younger generation is not so much "hung up" on what the Bible says (i.e., the interpretation of its writings) as on whether or not the Bible is the standard to turn to at all. They are asking, "Is it a valid standard of right and wrong?" This is the question we must answer.

In this paper we will explore whether or not we have answered this question in our traditional approaches, and suggestions will be made for ways in which we might change the approach to meet the new and different problems presented by our "now" generation.

There are three basic attitudes toward morality. There are those who are moral, i.e., believe in a code of morality which should be adhered to at all times. There are those who are immoral, i.e., believe there is a code but choose to violate it. And there are those who do not believe that a code exists at all, or who believe the code is arbitrarily made by men and that they have a right to ignore it.

There is a basic difference between the immoral individual and the amoral person (the one who believes that no real code exists, or that it is not legitimate to insist on such a code). Perhaps this can be seen by an example. In recent years parents have been greeted with a new problem in helping Junior with his homework in arithmetic. The rules which we took for granted, and with which we felt comfortable, suddenly no longer apply when Junior arrives home with the "new math." This is disturbing to many parents, because rules which they accepted as axiomatic now need to be redefined. Instead of accepting as automatically correct that  $2 + 2 = 4$ , the student of the "new math" is taught to ask, "Why?" Parents, reared in the old comfortable school, which took such a simple problem and its answer for granted, are not prepared for the question, "Why?" with reference to  $2 + 2$ .

Just so, there are many rules of conduct, or moral codes, which we have long taken for granted. For example, it seems everyone has always agreed that "honesty is the best policy." Not everyone has followed this rule, but even those who broke it never pretended that it was right to break it. They *chose* to do so because they *wanted* to, not because they thought it was right to do so. Now, however, we are faced with a new generation of youngsters who do not accept the axiom, "Honesty is the best policy"—not because they want to be dishonest, but because they question the right of anyone to make such a code of ethics or morals. When one says to them, "Honesty is the best policy," the retort is "Why?" or "Who said so?" It becomes a question of authority, or a question of whether or not there really *is* a valid criterion of right and wrong.

Of course, to those of us who are Christians, and to

people who believe in the Bible as the inspired word of God, there is no problem. Whatever the Book says is the rule for us to follow, and it simply becomes a matter of how we interpret the Book. However, for us to assume that we can solve the problem of morality for our modern generation by quoting the Book is to be naive and ineffective.

Some have attempted to solve the problem by bringing out scientific proofs of the authenticity and genuineness of the Book. Such "proofs" seem powerful and convincing to us, but to our scientific and skeptical young people they appear inadequate and unconvincing. We cannot amass enough evidence to swing the scales in favor of faith or to absolutely defeat the skeptic.

This is a point that many religious people find hard to understand. The problem lies in our assumption that faith can be built upon evidence alone. By its very nature faith requires more than evidence to sustain it. Faith is an experience which takes place inside a person. It is personal and individual, and it can no more be shared by words than a young man can tell you how it feels to love his girl friend. Thousands of words have been expended in attempts to describe both phenomena (faith and love), but words in this area have failed utterly.

How then do you transmit faith and love to another person? First, let's talk about love, inasmuch as we can discuss this without controversial theological overtones. It should be obvious that a person who has never loved cannot understand what I mean when I say, "I love my wife." He has an academic understanding, but this falls far short of the mark and does not explain to him the sac-

rifices that I might make for love, nor the behavior that characterizes one who loves. Only when he experiences love himself can he understand the things I say about it. The same truth applies to faith. Until one has faith, he cannot understand another individual's involvement in it. Words are useless as tools for transmitting faith to another person.

How then can we cause another to experience faith? In exactly the same way that we may cause another to experience love. When our behavior, dictated by love, is attractive enough to another to make him want to share the experience of love, he may seek it, and to seek it is to find it. Just so with faith. When our behavior, directed by faith, shows the man without faith that he is missing something worthwhile, he will begin to examine the evidence, and this gets him into the process by which faith is developed. Once he has examined the evidence, and has tried a bit of faith, the experience strengthens the process and (as the writer of Romans says) he moves from "faith to faith."

The process is from desire, to evidence, to experience. If we would pass on our faith to another, we must not try to start with evidences. We must start by building desire. Only then will the evidence be examined. If we leave out the effort to build desire, the evidence is wasted, for it is presented to closed eyes and stopped up ears.

What has all of this to do with morality? Much indeed. We have already stated that Christian people look to the Bible for their code of morals, and that this authority is sufficient for them. We have also noted that such a process for arriving at morals is not effective with our modern gen-

eration. We *cannot* simply point to the Bible and expect them to sit up and take notice. In the last few paragraphs we have argued that faith must begin with desire, and that our job is to create desire in people, to believe the Bible and its code of morals.

There are two ways to build desire: (1) make people realize that they have a deep need which must be satisfied, and that they do not have the answer to it, in their present scope of knowledge; or (2) make them realize that you have something—peace, happiness, etc.—which they strongly desire. In either case, they will have a tendency to at least listen to what you have to suggest. Failing in either of these areas, we will preach our message to unheeding people. They *must* believe they have a need, and that we have something which might fill the void. It should not have to be stated that building church buildings, preaching sermons, and carrying out the rituals of Sunday morning church services are not going to get this job done!

In order to show an individual that he has a need, which is not fulfilled by the methods he is presently using, you must know what the methods are, and why they are failing. It is not enough to use broad generalities and word attacks. You cannot win this argument by referring to axioms, which you accept, but which mean nothing to the one to whom you are talking. You cannot do it by disdain- ing the terms he uses, without specifying what these terms mean to you, and why you feel the ideas they convey are incorrect.

Let me use two examples. The word "existentialism" has been generally attacked as atheistic and anti-Christian.

Such an attack has done great harm to our attempts to reach the intellectual, who has studied the philosophy of "existentialism" and knows something about it. He understands that there are existentialists who are atheists, but he knows that there are also deeply religious existentialists, who look to their faith as the only answer to a life of complete despair. When such a student hears "existentialism" being attacked, in broad and general terms, as atheistic and not worthy to even be studied, he "turns off" the attacker as an ignorant person who doesn't know what he is talking about.

If one is to attack some of the incorrect conclusions *some* existentialists have drawn, he should be most careful to spell out exactly what conclusions he is taking issue with, and why they seem incorrect to *him*. But to say that all "existentialism" is contrary to the Bible and against God does nothing, either to refute the false claims of *some* existentialists, or to cause the person we are trying to reach to pay attention to what *we* think is right.

Another example is perhaps even more sensitive. I refer to what is known as "situation ethics." There is a way of defining "situation ethics" so that it is a very Biblical concept. Jesus, who kept the law of Moses and under most circumstances would not violate the Sabbath, found it necessary to depart from a technical observance of the day, in order to help some needy people. In another case, Jesus, who was usually calm and non-aggressive, changed this desirable characteristic in order to drive the money changers from the temple. The situation called for it, and Jesus made the decision on the basis of the problem at hand. In both instances, what Jesus did could be construed as "situation ethics," according to one definition of the words. If you



refuse to recognize this, you are insisting that words always be defined as YOU want them to be defined. In which case, you are always going to have a communication problem — especially with the modern generation.

To accept that Jesus practiced a form of “situation ethics,” in the above instances, does not argue that Mr. Fletcher’s brand of “situation ethics” is correct. Nor does it argue that the “new morality” or the “Playboy philosophy” is acceptable. It simply argues that we must carefully and specifically define what we are talking about, and make our attack in *specific* areas, instead of upon broad general assumptions. We cannot fight words with axioms and assumptions, and expect to have much effect on our modern world.

Now that we have said what we feel is *ineffective*, let us address ourselves to what we believe might be *effective*. One of the first rules of the scientific method (which our younger generation has been taught to revere) is observation of existing phenomena, in order to determine what the *question* is. This step, when applied to morality, can be most productive. Observe our world. The crime rate . . . the rate of mental illness . . . incidence of unhappiness due to broken homes . . . illegitimacy . . . war . . . racial strife, etc. are evident to all. Everyone can view these facts, and everyone does. It is here that we must begin. We must be able to show that much of this misery is due to a lack of morality on the part of those who have the power to make things happen.

Most young people today would readily place the label of “immorality” on racism, war, poverty, etc. They must be made to face the *inevitable conclusion of their own observation*.

If one is to label a situation immoral, this argues that there *must* be *some* standard of what *is* moral and what is *not!* To admit this is to be driven to discover what one's source of authority *is*. Where do you go to find this standard, by which you label one thing moral and another immoral?!

Many sources of authority might be suggested, but most of them would be rejected, both by the youth of today and by Christian people. Such sources as the government, society, the church, etc. are disavowed by most people, with in and without the establishment, when it comes to moral issues. A few accept the church as the standard, but even most Christians believe that there is a higher authority than the "organized" church. Some people accept society as the lawgiver in moral matters, but they have a "what is proper" sense of morals, and this is hardly the kind of morality that solves any of life's pressing problems.

So most members of our younger generation are left with only the concepts of the "new morality." This has been stated many ways, but it finally comes to "whatever the individual *feels* is right for him to do, is right." The *person himself* becomes the highest authority in matters of morals and ethics. "Doing one's own thing" is very big, among the modern would-be philosophers of today.

In the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco, in the past five years, we have had an opportunity to observe this brand of morality in operation. Here was a community with an absolute minimum of rules, and a permissiveness never before seen in our country (to my knowledge). Everyone shared with everyone else, and everyone was allowed the freedom to "do his own thing." For a while. Then the

predators moved in. The criminals, the drug pushers, the delinquents, the exhibitionists, the sex seekers, and other human animal types arrived. The non-aggressive, "we want to be free" hippies found themselves prey to the animals, there in their jungle where there were no rules. Today the Haight-Ashbury is a dangerous, sad place, full of sick people and criminal activity. No happy flower children roam the streets. The days of sharing are over, the beautiful people have gone.

In any society when there are no rules to govern the traffic, the one driving the biggest truck gets the right-of-way. The one with the most power, the most money, or the most influence gets what he wants, at the expense of all others. This is a practical view of the "new morality" in action. Anyone who has been there knows it won't work. But is there anywhere to turn? is the question.

Of course there is. *We* know this, and *we* know that the place is the Bible, but unfortunately *we* have obscured this vital fact, by enshrining the Bible within large, stiff, cold, irrelevant church buildings. Because of this, our young people feel that the Bible is the private preserve of people *who seem to put ritual and real estate above love and service to mankind*. So long as we keep the Bible in this kind of unattractive case, they will never look to it for the answers.

We must confront the people of today with the true message of the Bible, but it must be brought in the hands of those who *really* care. No message, moral or religious, is going to be heard from any other type messenger.

What is the message? Simply this: In every society, some

moral code is necessary for survival. This code must be the same for all, or the law of "might makes right" will take over. This means there must be some source of authority higher than the individual himself. Obviously, to leave this to the government, or to society, leads to despots and oppressors. The friends of authority will be favored, and all others will suffer. Where then can we turn?

We must find a law higher than man can dictate, and one that even the rulers themselves must be made to respect. When our country was founded, the constitution was written upon the premises of Christianity, with the Bible as the source of authority. So long as the elected rulers are forced to adhere to these principles of morality, everyone benefits. It is only when they are allowed, by hook or crook, to by-pass these moral principles, that men suffer.

We must make our young people, and all others, see that the principles of Christianity militate against war and slavery—against poverty and racism—against crime and delinquency. They *must* be made to see that even when the church fails to uphold these principles, it is violating the *only* standard of morality by which men can survive! We **MUST** divorce the Bible from the church establishment, so that men might see that the weakness of the one (the church) is the result of man's failures, but that the strength of the other (the Bible) is not weakened by this. We must not allow them to disdain the Bible, because they disdain the church establishment, with its hypocritical and irrelevant attitudes and actions.

If, in our hysterical desire to preserve the institution at all costs, we lose the power of the Word to *create the REAL*

*church in each new generation, we will not only damn ourselves, but will fail future generations and "cause these little ones to stumble."* I leave you to read the words of inspiration for the sentence passed upon those who do this.

For there to be a perfect moral code, it must be written by one who loves mankind very much, and who loves all in equal measure. It must be written by one who is wise enough to know what is best for all, and who wants to preserve the liberty and the integrity of all. And it must be written by one who can write in forgiveness, even for those who may violate some of its principles, lest the moral code itself rise up to destroy us, through recognition of our own guilt.

Only the One who created us could write such a moral code. And we believe that He did.

Roy F. Osborne

CHRISTIAN MORALITY  
(Situation Ethics)  
PRENTICE A. MEADOR, JR.

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University of Illinois, M.A., 1961

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*PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH*

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"Aristotle's *Rhetoric*: A Translation with Introduction and Notes."

*Published Articles*

"Munucian, *On Epicheiremes*: An Introduction and A Translation," *Speech Monographs* (March, 1964), 54-63.

"The Classical Epicheireme: A Re-examination," *Western Speech* (Summer, 1966), 151-155.

"Speech Education at Rome," *Western Speech* (Winter, 1967), 9-15.

"A Medieval Tradition in Preaching: The Homily," *Restoration Quarterly* (March, 1967), 65-74.

*Ancient Greek and Roman Rhetoricians* (contributor) (Co-

lumbia, Missouri: The Artcraft Press, 1968).

"The Skeptic Theory of Perception: A Philosophical Antecedent to Ciceronian Probability," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* LIV (Dec. 1968), 340-351.

*Articles in Press*

"Quintilian." *A chapter in A Synoptic History of Classical Theory* (New York: Random-House, 1969).

"Quintilian and Latin Rhetoricians." A chapter in *Readings in Rhetorical Theory*. (publisher not determined)

"A Note on Quintilian's *Vir Bonus*," *Southern Speech Journal*, (1970).

*Articles in Preparation*

"The Twelfth Century English Homily," for the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*.

"Interlacing and Medieval Rhetoric," for *Speculum*.

"Rhetoric and Personality in Chaucer's Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale," for *Modern Philology*.

*Book Reviews*

Lacey Baldwin Smith, *The Elizabethan World*. Boston. Houghton Mifflin, 1967, in *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (April, 1968).

Marin, *Bibliography of the "Essay on the Sublime."* London. Grill, 1967, in *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. (February, 1969).

John Higginbotham (trans.), *Cicero on Moral Obligation*. Los Angeles. University of California Press, 1968, in *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (1969).

*Convention Papers*

"Changing Concepts of the Classical Epicheireme," Speech Association of America Convention, Cleveland, Ohio, 1962.

"Critical Edition: Focus for Research in Public Address," Speech Association of America Convention, Chicago, Illinois, 1964.

"Speech Pedagogy in Rome," Speech Association of America Convention, New York, New York, 1965.

"Early Medieval Preaching in England"; The Biblical Forum of Abilene Christian College, Abilene, Texas, 1966.

"Early Medieval Preaching: The Homily," Conference of Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1968.

- "Medieval Preaching and Rhetoric," Medieval Seminar, University of Calif., Davis, March, 1968.  
 "The Lesser Latin Rhetoricians," Conference of Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1968.  
 "Cicero on Humanism and Rhetoric," UCLA Colloquium on Rhetoric & Humanism, Spring, 1969.

#### PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Referee for papers to *Southern Speech Journal*, 1967, 1968, 1969.  
 Member of Planning Committee, "Symposium on the History and Significance of Rhetoric," UCLA, 1967.  
 Referee for papers to *Southern Speech Journal*, 1968.  
 Chairman, "Section on Middle English Literature," Conference of Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1968.  
 Chairman, "Section on Rhetorical Theory," Western Speech Association Convention, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1968.  
 Associate Editor (Classical Rhetorical Theory), *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 1968-69.

#### Memberships

- Repertoire International des Medievistes, 1968-.  
 The Medieval and Renaissance Center at UCLA, 1965-.  
 The Renaissance Society of America, 1968-.  
 The Speech Association of America, 1962-.  
 The Western Speech Association, 1963-.  
 The American Philological Association, 1966-.  
 American Association of University Professors, 1964-.  
 Phi Kappa Phi, Delta Sigma Rho, Pi Kappa Delta.

#### Consultative Service

- Accrediting Commission for Secondary Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, 1966-.  
 UCLA Engineering and Management Conference, 1964-.

#### COMMITTEE SERVICE

##### Departmental

- Undergraduate Advisor, Department of Speech, 1965-68.



*University*

Committee on Undergraduate Scholarships, Honors, and Prizes, 1965-67.

Chairman, Committee on Undergraduate Scholarships, Honors, and Prizes, 1967.

Representative of UCLA on University of California Scholarship Committee, 1967.

Member of Ph.D. Committees in Speech and English, 1964-.

Liaison Officer to the Danforth Foundation, 1964-65.

*AWARDS*

University of California Faculty Summer Fellowship, 1964.

*Outstanding Young Men of America*, 1965.

*Who's Who in American Education*, 1967.

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As the Russian armies drove westward to meet the Americans and British at the Elbe, a Soviet patrol picked up a Mrs. Bergmeier foraging food for her three children. Unable even to get word to the children, and without any clear reason for it, she was taken off to a prison camp in the Ukraine. Her husband had been captured in the Bulge and taken to a P.O.W. camp in Wales.

When he was returned to Berlin, he spent weeks and weeks rounding up his children; two (Elise, twelve, and Paul, ten) were found in a detention school run by the Russians, and the oldest, Hans, fifteen, was found hiding in a cellar near the Alexander Platz. Their mother's whereabouts remained a mystery, but they never stopped searching. She, more than anything else, was needed to re-knit them as a family in that dire direction of hunger, chaos, and fear.

Meanwhile, in the Ukraine, Mrs. Bergmeier learned through a sympathetic commandant that her husband and family were trying to keep together and find her. But the

rules allowed them to release her for only two reasons: (1) illness, needing medical facilities beyond the camp's, in which case she would be sent to a Soviet hospital elsewhere, and (2) pregnancy, in which case she would be returned to Germany as a liability.

She turned things over in her mind and finally asked a friendly Volga German guard to impregnate her, which he did. Her condition being medically verified, she was sent back to Berlin and to her family. They welcomed her with open arms, even when she told them how she had managed it. When the child was born, they loved him more than all the rest, on the view that little Dietrich had done more for them than anyone.

When it was time for him to be christened, they took him to the pastor on a Sunday afternoon. After the ceremony they sent Dietrich home with the children and sat down in the pastor's study, to ask him whether they were right to feel as they did about Mrs. Bergmeier and Dietrich. Should they be grateful to the Volga German? Had Mrs. Bergmeier done the right thing?

This is one of the actual cases used by Joseph Fletcher in his potent book, *Situation Ethics*, to argue that there are no absolute laws, no moral actions which may be labeled as absolutely right or as always absolutely wrong. "The situationalist," Fletcher defines, "enters into every decision-making situation fully armed with the ethical maxims of his community and his heritage and he treats them with respect as illuminators of his problem. Just the same, he is prepared in any situation to compromise them or set them aside *in the situation* if love seems better served by doing so" (P. 26).

Situation ethics is an approach to moral decision-making which has had, already, dramatic impact on morality in

America. The leading exponent of situation ethics, Joseph Fletcher, has articulated an ethical view held by well-known theological heavyweights: Barth, Bultmann, Bonhoeffer, Robinson, Tillich, Pike, and others. The gist of their ethical theory is that no decision may be prescribed before the event since what appears to be wrong in one set of circumstances may, in another situation, be the loving response. Only love is held to be intrinsically good. Consequently, for the situationalist, Mrs. Bergmeier's adultery becomes more expedient than chastity in order that she might be reunited with her family.

Fletcher excels in vigor and forthright statement in describing "the new morality," and this is one of the reasons his is an excellent book to read in order to seize the atmosphere as well as the detail of the new morality. His enthusiasm for his position is boundless and bold. The author has said plainly the things that he wants to say, and has said them with a directness that leaves no room for major misunderstanding of his meaning. Whether the things he has said clarify or obscure the subject he is discussing is another matter. The dustjacket of *Situation Ethics* carries the statement, "Situationalism is the crystal precipitated in Christian ethics by our errors, pragmatism, and relativism." It goes on to observe, "This candid and passionate brief for individual responsibility is completely attuned to our secular society—and to existential modern man, who has learned with the Atom Bomb that existence not only demands decision, but *is* decision." If we do not happen to be convinced that modern pragmatism and relativism and secularity can penetrate to the very marrow of the Christian ethic, and if we do not share the view of existential modern man that existence is decision, we may not be altogether reassured that the light has finally shown

to vanish the darkness in which the topic of Christian behavior has hitherto been plunged. I want, therefore, to draw your attention to the following concerning Joseph Fletcher's *Situation Ethics*.

First, "*Situation ethics*" or "*the new morality*" is the legitimate child of the "*new theology*." When you have a new theology on your hands you soon have a new morality as well. Because religion and standards of conduct go together, a change in one indicates a change in the other. Religion says first, "So believe!" and next, "So do!" It should be noted, though, that the link is between religion and *standards* of conduct, not necessarily between religion and *good* conduct. A man of almost any faith can recognize himself in the old story of the pious storekeeper who called downstairs to his son, "Have you sanded the sugar? Have you watered the milk? Then come up to prayers!" Whenever there are changes in the rules by which religious people live, this is clear evidence that religious belief is changing. At the very least, the will of God is being differently interpreted, and this may indicate that former beliefs about the nature of God himself are being jettisoned. From the angle of the man on the street, it is easier to see what kinds of changes are going on in religious belief by noting the alterations in what is religiously permitted or prohibited than by attending to theological explanations.

Secondly, Fletcher's *Situation Ethics* reduces the ethic of love into absurdity and into moral behavior. Fletcher says dogmatically: "Justice is nothing other than love working out its problems. This viewpoint has existed potentially for a long time. Now we state it flatly and starkly so that there is no mistaking what is said. Love equals jus-

tice; justice equals love (p. 95).” To say this “flatly and starkly” does not suffice, however, to make it true. Fletcher’s argument is that justice is love calculating in terms of prudence, involving “a loving use of force” (p. 100). President Truman’s decision to drop the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, for example, was made on a vast scale of love calculation (p. 98). This is surely the *reductio ad absurdum* of the love ethic. It involves an entire disregard of the reason why political choices are made, and of the end sought by political action. It assumes that President Truman might conceivably broadcast to Japan the message. “Sorry to have to annihilate you people, but it’s a choice of love!”—which would either have been the statement of a lunatic suffering from a messianic delusion or an expression of the most immoral cynicism. The outcome of trying to produce a single maxim embracing both justice and love, indeed, is that the result fits neither sphere. The situation calculus runs: “It is right to deal lovingly with the enemy unless to do so hurts too many friends” (p. 115). Loving our enemies so long as our friends are not hurt too extensively is a principle that would hardly satisfy Christ on the one hand or a Machiavelli on the other. Its formula for combining love and self-interest succeeds only in advising us to have the innocence of serpents and the wisdom of doves.

Thirdly, Fletcher has adopted an ethic radically at odds with Christian ethics. At the same time, he is determined to lay down a single, absolute good. He insists that in all dimensions of human life there is only one thing needful—to love our neighbor. This is God’s will for man, his declared intention communicated through Christ. As a result, there is a remarkable division in Fletcher’s thinking.

He starts out by seeking the good for man, and finds that it is man's freedom to seek his own good (the happiness of the majority) without reference to anything outside the world of man. And yet, he retains the wholly religious concern for one absolute standard. He says that there are no religiously sanctioned principles any more; nothing is either good or bad in itself; and we are fully free to decide for ourselves how we are to behave in any situation. And then he turns around and insists that there is, nevertheless, one changeless law, the law of love which is always binding in each and every situation. We have to obey this law "religiously" so to speak. Yet, we are still completely free to decide how we are to behave, because we must decide for ourselves, in each and every instance, what is the loving thing to do. Although Fletcher insists that the strategy of love meets each situation with rules, in point of fact behind each of his examples of situationalist solutions to moral problems lie an undeclared and universal rule governing that particular situation.

It is not enough for Fletcher to say, as he does (p. 85), that situationalism is, of course, open to abuse and manipulation, but then, so is every other ethical stand. The point is that some "strategies" are much more open than others, and that his formula of love as the only norm and the same as justice places no valid check upon human selfishness or cruelty. Because Fletcher generally takes for his examples small scale situations, he has no difficulty in showing that cutting across accepted moral standards for the sake of "love" is frequently the way to obtain "happiness." When he casts his eyes on a wider situation, for example, the decision to use the Atomic Bomb, his trust in human ability benevolently to use the law of love appears incredibly naive.

The true character of situation ethics is perhaps best revealed in its fantastic hypothetical situations which must be directed in its defense. The Christian ethic of *agape* (unconditional love) is concretely defined in the Scripture, revealed in the changeless nature of God himself, and applies in terms of moral situations of daily life.

There is, then, a very real difference between the ruling principles in situation ethics and Christian ethics. While both start with love, one has severed the norm from its context. The other seeks to know the norm by observing it at work in life — the life of Christ. "And the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and true" (John 1:14). Christian ethics are from God. Situation ethics or the new morality is from the new theology. In terms of origin, that is quite a difference!

# THE NATURE OF MAN ACCORDING TO THE EVOLUTIONARY VIEWPOINT

CLARK STEVENS

William Clark Stevens was born at Richland, Texas, in 1921. He was awarded the B.S. degree from Harding College in 1948. The M.A. degree was conferred upon him in 1951 by University of Arkansas, and the Ph.D. was conferred by Vanderbilt University in 1956. In 1962 he was awarded a National Institutes of Health Post-Doctoral Fellowship to study for a year at the Marine Laboratory of the University of Miami.

Since entering the teaching profession, Mr. Stevens has held faculty positions at Beebe Junior College (Arkansas), Vanderbilt University, Harding College, and Abilene Christian College. He also has served in the capacity of Graduate Teaching Assistant at the University of Arkansas and Vanderbilt University. Mr. Stevens was a member of the United States Army Air Corps for three years during World War II.



His general field of interest is microbiology; his special interests are in microbial physiology and biochemistry. He holds membership in Texas Academy of Science, Sigma Xi, Beta Beta Beta Honorary Biological Society, Alpha Chi, and American Society for Microbiology.

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According to the evolutionary viewpoint, man is a descendant of animals resulting from an evolu-



tionary process. Consequently, in order to understand the nature of man, it is necessary to study his evolution. Organic evolution consists of two major phases: the origin of life and the development of the diverse living organisms. This, of course, excludes an explanation of the origin of matter, which also would be necessary to eliminate the need for a divine creator.

The origin of life, apart from a special creation, falls within the scope of biochemical evolution. A popular hypothesis of biochemical evolution proposed initially by Oparin begins with the earth as an exceedingly hot, swirling mass of gas.<sup>1</sup> The denser elements began to sink into the inner portion of the mass and the lighter elements accumulated at the surface. At first occurring in the uncombined state because of the terrific heat, these lighter elements (hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon, and oxygen) began to react chemically as the earth began to cool. Hydrogen, being more reactive than the others, combined with each of them to form water, methane, and ammonia. Water thus formed was at first in the vapor state, but as cooling proceeded it began to condense and then to precipitate. For years, perhaps for centuries, it rained and the entire surface of the earth was covered with water. Methane and ammonia were dissolved in the water as well as minerals from the earth's surface, and these dissolved substances began to react with each other under the influence of the intense energy of radiation and lightning. These reactions produced simple organic compounds such as sugars and amino acids, which are usually associated with living things. Continued

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<sup>1</sup> Oparin, A. I. *The Origin of Life*. 2nd ed. (New York: Dover Publication Inc., 1953).

reactivity presumably resulted in the formation of great quantities of these compounds as well as fatty acids, purines, and pyrimidines, all of which are building blocks for the complex molecules of protoplasm. The surface waters presumably became a rich soup of organic matter. Gradually these molecules began to combine to form the virus-like macromolecules of nucleoprotein, endowed with the capacity for self-duplication. As free organic matter was used up, those nucleoproteins which could adsorb needed materials on their surface became favored in the struggle for existence and later became primitive living cells as they acquired the capacity to form surface membranes around themselves. Further evolution then took two major courses: (1) diversification at the unicellular level and (2) aggregation of cells followed by diversification at the multicellular level.

Diversification has been explained on the basis of several natural phenomena.<sup>2</sup> The best known of these factors is natural selection, the concept of which was developed independently by both Alfred Russel Wallace and Charles Darwin during the last century. According to the concept, all kinds of organisms produce far more offspring than can survive and intense competition for survival develops. All populations have many variations. Those individuals with favorable variations survive in the competition and the others die out. Hence, only the fittest survive and this results in the changing of the general population characteristics. By long term operation of natural selection, the population characteristics may become changed so greatly that a new species develops.

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<sup>2</sup> Volpe, E. Peter. *Understanding Evolution*. (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co., 1967).

Natural selection can operate only on those variations already present in a population, it cannot introduce new characteristics. However, another concept, the mutational theory, provides for the origin of new characteristics. Mutations are chemical changes in genes which result in the appearance of new hereditary traits. They occur spontaneously in nature at a very slow rate and can also be induced by radiations and by various chemicals. Mutations with adaptive value would impart reproductive fitness to organisms and they would be favored by natural selection.

To some extent evolution is explained on the basis of genetic drift, which may involve characteristics with little or no adaptive value. Genetic drift is a change in the genetic makeup of a population which has become very much restricted in size. The relatively few individuals remaining in a population may have characteristics which were actually quite rare in the original population.

Cataclysmic evolution is sudden major change in organisms usually associated with polyploidy, the multiplication of the total chromosome complement of an organism. Especially among cultivated crops do we find new varieties arising by polyploidy.

An additional concept to explain diversification is adaptive radiation, or the tendency of populations to spread out and exploit new habitats. As they become geographically isolated, groups gradually begin to vary as each accumulates its own mutations.

Through the operation of forces such as these, all the diverse forms of life are supposed to have arisen from a

primordial ancestor, which in turn developed by biochemical evolution. The culmination of this evolution has been man. According to the evolutionary view point, modern man's ancestors were apelike.<sup>3</sup> The account of man's evolution described by Weiss has the hominid line descending from the trees as a gibbon-like ape.<sup>4</sup> This descent supposedly was the result of a major climate change which thinned out the overhead canopy of the forest trees. The gibbon-like foot and small body gave the hominid the agility to survive at the ground level among a variety of fierce carnivores. Strong hind limb muscles would have definite survival value and hence would have developed by natural selection previously described. The exact path of human descent has not been discovered. In fairly recent years numerous fossils of ape men or man apes have been found in Africa, China, Java, and Europe and these are considered to be near relatives of modern man but not actually in his mainline of descent. Furthermore, some representatives of modern man seem to have been contemporary with these supposed ancient relatives. So actually man's exact evolutionary origin is unknown; but man is an animal from a strictly evolutionary viewpoint. Nevertheless, he is an animal with unique attributes. He is distinct from all other animals, not just because of a few genetic traits, but because of his entire complement of genes.<sup>5</sup>

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3 Volpe, *op. cit.* (p. 141)

4 Weiss, Paul B. *The Science of Biology*, 3rd ed. (New York: The Science of Biology, 1967), pp. 814-820.

5 Dobzhansky, Theodosius. *The Road Traversed and the Road Ahead*; in *Readings in Biological Science*, edit. by Irving William Knobloch, 2nd ed., (New York: Appleton-Century-Crafts, 1967), p. 444.

The most unique characteristics of man are those associated with the brain.<sup>6</sup> Other animals can learn, but the quantitative difference in the learning of man and animals is so great as to become qualitative. In many other features, man is considered to be rather generalized and is actually placed in the order Primates, supposedly one of the more primitive groups of placental animals.<sup>7</sup>

Although the evolutionist is confident human evolution has not occurred by unique processes, he does consider man to be a unique product of evolution. He attributes the highly successful evolution of modern man to the following complement of factors:

1. Grasping hands, an inheritance from arboreal ancestors.
2. Bipedal locomotion, freeing the hands for work.
3. Tool manipulation, made possible by grasping hands and bipedal motion.
4. Greater dependence on vision and hearing.
5. Great increase in brain size, concomitant to tool manipulation and greater dependence on sensory mechanisms.
6. Shifting of brain function from sensory and motor response to association activities, yielding higher mental ability and reasoning.
7. Speech and tool technology, resulting from increased mental ability and resulting in sociocultural evolution.
8. Development of writing, resulting in extremely rapid social evolution and advanced technological development.

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6 Weiss, *op. cit.* pp. 819-820.

7 Savage, Jay M. *Evolution*, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1969), p. 137.

Brain size, bipedalism, tool manipulation and associated features possibly evolved as a unit according to Savage.<sup>8</sup>

Julian Huxley thinks personality is the highest product of evolution and has undergone no genetic change since the cave man. The two really crucial novelties in human mental organization are speech and the common pool of organized experience.<sup>9</sup>

Huxley considers much of the uniqueness of human evolution to be due to psychosocial or cultural evolution. The mind is determined genetically and it has made man dominant. It in turn has made cultural evolution possible, including the evolution of religion.<sup>10</sup> The importance of cultural evolution in the uniqueness of man is strongly supported by Dobzhansky, who also attributes human values and morals to cultural evolution.<sup>11</sup> These men emphasize that cultural and social evolution differ from biological evolution, but the latter determines the potential for the cultural and social evolution which have contributed so much to the nature of man as he now exists. This is the evolutionary viewpoint.

The uniqueness of man in the living world is not in dispute. In imagination, reasoning, judgment, learning, e-

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8 Savage, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-147.

9 Huxley, Julian. *Evolution In Action*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1953), pp. 93-97.

10 Huxley, Julian. *Essays of a Humanist*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1964) pp. 72-115.

11 Dobzhansky, Th. "Man and Natural Selection." *American Scientist* 49: 285-299, 1961.

motions, notion of values, sense of the sacred, memory, aesthetic appreciations, ingenuity, speech, writing, and many other traits and capacities, man is truly unique, set completely apart from the remainder of the living world. The question is not his uniqueness but how he became unique. Evolutionists hold that man in all his uniqueness has evolved by natural processes from animal ancestors. In fact most infer a line of descent which can be traced all the way to a primordial ancestor which in turn arose by biochemical evolution from non-living matter.

Although popularly accepted in this day and age, and purported by many to be established fact, the evolutionary hypothesis has a lot of weak points which need to be examined. Far too often these flaws are minimized as inconsequential by simply stating that evolution as an occurrence is above question, that only its exact course and the mechanisms involved are still in dispute. Stating this does not make it so.

At its very foundation the evolutionary hypothesis is supposition. We can really only imagine what conditions existed in the prehistoric earth. We can only suppose that reactions occurred under these conditions to yield the highly complex proteins and nucleic acids which characterize living things. Such reactions do not occur now apart from living organisms. Even allowing for their synthesis under the conditions existing then, there still is the problem of the origin of life. These compounds alone are not alive. Nor has man with all his wisdom and ingenuity learned to mix them so as to make them come alive. Even if he could, this would represent the action of an intelligence not existing in the prehistoric world by the evolutionary hypothesis. Furthermore, these same high energy radiations which supposedly

energized the unusual reactions of this early world are among the most effective life destroying agents we use in the microbiology laboratory. They destroy rather than produce life.

Based upon the success of artificial selection in the laboratory, and especially in stock breeding, we concede the possibility of the operation of a selection in nature. However, just as there are limitations on artificial selection, and the cattle breeder can only succeed in improving his cattle (he can not change them into horses), we believe there is also a limitation on natural selection. The limitation according to the evolutionist is only time. Given enough time natural selection supposedly has no limits of activity. In fact, given enough time, the seemingly impossible actually becomes highly probable. Upon this hinges the whole evolutionary hypothesis. It is difficult to argue about time, but the introduction of time as the common denominator of evolution certainly removes the study from the factual to the hypothetical.

Natural selection can not develop new hereditary characteristics in the organism, but can only act upon those already present. New characteristics can arise by mutations, which are chemical changes in genes. Mutations do occur. They can be detected and investigated scientifically. The discovery of their occurrence has given much impetus to the evolutionary movement. Theodosius Dobzhansky, present day champion of evolution, at one time hailed mutations as being the raw materials of evolution.<sup>12</sup> However, genet-

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<sup>12</sup> Dobzhansky, Theodosius. *The Biological Basis of Human Freedom*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), p. 56.



icists generally recognize that most mutations are detrimental, some even being lethal. More than 99 per cent of mutations in some studies have proved to be detrimental.<sup>13</sup> Dobzhansky has likewise called attention to this and has raised question as to whether such changes that result in loss of viability, diseases, and monstrosities can actually serve as evolutionary building blocks. He also suggests that natural selection would tend toward stability and actually decrease mutability.<sup>14</sup> These observations coupled with the fact that no one has actually observed any new kind of organism arise through mutation and selection indicate to me a pretty serious weakness in the evolutionary hypothesis. New strains of cattle may arise, and new strains of wheat or corn may be developed, but actually no new kinds of organisms have been seen to appear. Of course, here again the evolutionist pleads for time.

Genetic drift and polyploidy actually introduce no new genes into the population pool and consequently would result in only limited variations at most. Adaptive radiation, which results in geographic isolation, would also have to be coupled with mutations to actually bring about variation. Considering the high proportion of detrimental mutations, one again wonders about the limits of variation. Furthermore, even though numerous instances can be cited of population differences existing between geographically isolated regions, one can also cite numerous instances of great di-

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13 Muller, H. J. "Radiation and Human Mutation." *Scientific American*. 193(5): 58-68, 1955.

14 Dobzhansky, Theodosius. *Genetics and the Origin of Species*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), pp. 73-75.

versity of organisms in regions not geographically isolated.

When we consider man's intellect, imagination, ingenuity, ethics, inclination to worship, reason, judgment, emotions, and his conscience, and we see him so distinctly set apart in these traits from even those animals supposed to be his closest evolutionary kin, we cannot help but question his evolutionary origin. Man is a unique creature. We believe he is unique because he was created in God's own image.

And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Genesis: 1-27.

# THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF MAN

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“What is man?” This question, posed by a poet three thousand years ago, still vexes man. Since the poet spoke man has accomplished much, his latest achievement being a walk on the moon. But man is still an enigma, for he will likely settle the

question of the moon's geology before he decides who he himself is. If you listen to the experts, they give varying answers—the biologists one, the sociologists a second, and the psychologists still another. The Psalmist, of course, had his answer. His view of man permeates the Bible, but is not satisfactory to many twentieth-century academicians.

Those of us who are committed to Jesus Christ are interested in the Biblical answer. We would like a precise statement of the Biblical view so we can see wherein it differs from prevailing views. I shall discuss the doctrine of man which emerges in the Scriptures under the headings: (1) man as creation, (2) man as special creation, and (3) man as new creation.

### MAN AS CREATION

Throughout Scripture God is affirmed to be the source of all that is, which obviously includes man. The Genesis writer affirms "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). John repeats, "All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3). The Biblical view is a theistic view because God gives the universe its existence. An opposing view which commands considerable respect in our time is that affirmed by the materialist. The materialist believes that the atoms are eternal and give existence to all that is.

Man is like the rest of nature in that he was created by God. He has an affinity with and partakes of the rest of God's created universe. First of all, he shares the material nature of the earth. "Then the Lord God formed man

of dust from the ground" (Genesis 2:7). Second, he shares with the living creatures the breath of life. God breathed into man's nostrils "the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7). The King James Version reads "living soul," which has misled many, for they have assumed that this verse affirms man's difference from the animals. It really does the opposite, for what it affirms is that man has life just as animals have life. The Hebrew word translated soul in Genesis 2:7 is the same Hebrew word used in Genesis 1:20 and 30 to declare the living character of animals. In Genesis 1:20 it is the marine creatures that God calls into existence, the "moving creature that hath life." The Hebrew word translated life is *nephesh* which is translated "soul" in 2:7. In Genesis 1:30 beasts and birds are discussed and the statement made "wherein there is life." If the King James translation were consistent, it would have either soul or life in all three verses. We therefore learn from looking at the Hebrew that man shares life with the other creatures God has made. In his biological existence man obviously has a continuity with the rest of creation.

### MAN AS SPECIAL CREATION

Man, however, is not mere animal, for he was created in the "image of God" (Genesis 1:26). It is for this reason that we have titled our second point "Man as Special Creation." The Psalmist refers to man's unique status among the creatures by affirming that he was made a "little less than God" (Psalm 8:5). This is the Revised Standard translation. The King James says "a little lower than the angels" which follows the Greek of the Septuagint, but in the context the Psalmist has in mind the Genesis one ac-

count and a little less than God is a better parallel to the idea that man is created in God's image. Furthermore, the Hebrew word *elohim* is commonly translated "God," unless the context shows the word to point elsewhere. Hence both the Psalmist and the Genesis writer give man a unique status in the created order. Man is made in God's image and is a little less than him.

Immediately the question arises as to what is meant when the writer declares that man is made in God's image. All sorts of answers have been given, but we cannot take the time to enumerate them here. I think the answer lies in the statement immediately following the declaration of man's unique status. The writer continues by saying "and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth" (Genesis 1:26). The way in which man is like God is thus in the ability at dominion or ruling. God is the one who rules the universe he has created. God in turn has given man lesser dominion, but in this very ability to rule he is like God. Among all the creatures God has made, only man is charged with dominion, and herein lies his distinctiveness.

Man is like God because of an ability he has, that is, an ability to rule. Efforts have been made to identify this image with a substance within man, as did the medieval theologians who followed the Greek philosophers. Some people apparently still see this as man's uniqueness, because they attempt to locate a substance which departs from someone who is dying. In Scripture man's uniqueness lies in an ability to rule, not in a substance found within. Alexander Campbell saw clearly that this is the Bib-

lical view. In the *Christian Baptist* in 1828 (p. 463) he wrote about the manner of man's creation:

He [God] builds his body from the elements of the earth. He gives him a soul or animal life in common with all the animals created; but he infuses into him from himself directly, without any intervention, a spirit, a pure intellectual principle.

Campbell, as Genesis, identifies the soul with the principle of life which is found in both animal and man. Man's uniqueness he saw as being an ability, that is, intellectual ability. I think Campbell is correct from a Biblical standpoint. The only problem is that his view of intellect is more rationalistic than the Biblical view.

Man's ability to rule, to be man, is not limited to mere reason in Scripture. Passion or motivation is also a part of the unique character of man. A distinction between reason and motivation is not made in the Bible, since the word "heart" is often employed to identify what prompts man to do what he does. As this word is employed it is clear that reason is involved, but also motivation or passion. In locating the seat of evil in man, Jesus says, "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander." But it is also the heart which prompts man to do what is right. When the people in Jerusalem heard the news of Jesus' death and resurrection they "were pricked in their hearts" (Acts 2:37). It is also from the heart that men obey that form of doctrine (Romans 6:17). In each case the intellect is at work, but there is also the motivation which prompts man to action, whether it be love for God which prompts man to do the right, or whether it is evil desire which prompts man to

do evil. The heart as a Biblical term is not simply equated with rational mind, as J. W. Brents argues in *The Gospel Plan of Salvation* (p. 223).

### MAN AS NEW CREATION

From a New Testament standpoint the story of man, that is, who he is, is not complete in the account of the first creation. A new dimension is added to man through the new creation in Jesus Christ. Paul writes, "If any one is in Christ, he is a newcreation, the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (II Corinthians 5:17). Man, as he was first created, continually sinned; that is, he lived life on his own terms rather than on God's terms. And second, man as he was originally created apparently was not created to live forever. But man in Jesus Christ becomes a new creation both now and for eternity.

God created man as a freebeing to rule under his rule. But man aspired to be like God, which is to decide what is right and wrong (See Genesis 3:5, 22). Man had the freedom either to eat or not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden. God told him not to eat of it. But he decided to ignore God. The result was that his life went from bad to worse. The soil he tilled was crowded with thorns and thistles (Genesis 3:16, 17). The woman bore children in pain. Cain killed Abel. In Noah's time man's thoughts were continually evil and God destroyed all but Noah and his family. But man still wished to "call the shots" himself and even thought that he could defy God, so he started a tower. But God is never put in his place by man, and man



soon found that he now had trouble with his fellows because he could no longer communicate with them (Genesis 11:9). Man's sinfulness and his alienation both from God and his fellowman is the story of the rest of the Old Testament. The prophets held out little hope for man as originally created. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel thought the only solution was a new act of God, the creation of a new heart (Jeremiah 31:31-33, Ezekiel 36:26).

Man as first created was created for death, and was not immortal as some have claimed. Genesis 3:22, 23 is crucial at this point, "... now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden,..." Man, according to this statement, was not created to live forever. That possibility was available to him only through the tree of life which God had placed in the garden. When God prevented him from eating of that tree he was cut off from the source of eternal life; for he did not contain it within himself. Because man sinned he cut himself off from the source of life and brought about his own death. This is the point of Paul in I Corinthians 15:21, 22. "For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."

Jesus Christ brings about a new possibility for man, a new creation. The old has passed away so that man need no longer be weighed down by sin. But in Christ he is more than man of the first creation, for Jesus Christ brings a possibility for eternal life which cannot be lost as Adam lost it. Paul makes a contrast between the Adam who bestows life to man, and the Adam who bestows life eter-

nal. "The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit" (I Corinthians 15:45). Even though Adam was in God's image he was susceptible to death, but Christ is from heaven and bestows immortality. "The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven" (I Corinthians 15:48). Man even now participates in the eternal by being in the heavenly man, but full participation is future. "Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven" (I Corinthians 15:49). This final and irrevocable act of God changes man into a new form in which he will no longer be like the man Adam, that is, biological man. "And we shall be changed. For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality" (I Corinthians 15:52, 53).

This is man as seen from the Biblical perspective. He is both heroic and tragic at once. But he is not merely a child of the earth. His origin comes from beyond and his destiny extends into it.